



THE LEAGUER OF LATHOM.

A Tale of the Civil War in Lancashire.

BY

WILLIAM HARRISON AINSWORTH,

AUTHOR OF

“PRESTON FIGHT,” “BOSCOBEL,” “MANCHESTER REBELS,” “TOWER
OF LONDON,” “OLD SAINT PAUL’S,” &c. &c. &c.

'Twas when they raised, 'mid sap and siege,
The banners of their rightful liege,
At their she-captain's call;
Who, miracle of womankind!
Lent mettle to the meanest hind
That mann'd her castle wall.

WILLIAM STEWART ROSE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO
THE REV. F. R. RAINES, M.A., F.S.A.,
HON. CANON OF MANCHESTER,
RECTOR OF MILNROW, AND RURAL DEAN.

AUTHOR OF THE
“MEMOIRS OF JAMES, SEVENTH EARL OF DERBY,”

PUBLISHED BY THE CHETHAM SOCIETY;

A WORTHY BIOGRAPHY OF A GREAT HISTORICAL CHARACTER,
TO WHICH THE WRITER OF THIS TALE
OWES MUCH.

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THE
LEAGUER OF LATHOM.



Book the First.
THE SIEGE OF MANCHESTER.

I.

A PRESAGE OF ILL.

LATE one night, in the disastrous year 1642, soon after the commencement of the Civil War, as Lord Strange was alone in his closet at Knowsley Hall, reading a treatise by Cardan, blood fell suddenly upon the book. Being in a very melancholy frame of mind at the time, he was powerfully affected by the occurrence, and could not help regarding it as a presage of ill.

As soon as he had recovered his composure, he addressed a prayer to Heaven

for the safety and welfare of the king, and his own preservation from sudden and violent death, and had not long risen from his knees, when a tap at the door was heard, and next moment, a grave-looking personage, whose dress proclaimed him a divine, entered the closet.

This was Doctor Samuel Rutter, Archdeacon of Man, and Lord Strange's domestic chaplain. He had been absent for some months, having duties to perform in the Isle of Man, and had only returned on that very evening. He had seen his noble patron on his arrival at Knowsley Hall, and thought him looking very unwell, but little passed between them at the time. After they had separated for the night, an unaccountable uneasiness came over him, and being unable to shake off the feeling, he repaired to his lordship's study, being aware that he

had not retired to rest, and was much relieved by finding him seated composedly in his chair.

“Now Heaven be praised that I find your lordship well!” exclaimed the arch-deacon. “I have been much troubled concerning you, and could not seek my couch till I had satisfied my mind that you had not been seized by some sudden illness.”

Thanking him for his solicitude, Lord Strange said, “In truth, I have not been well, but am now somewhat better. Sit down, I pray you, my good friend. I shall be glad to have some converse with you.”

As Doctor Rutter placed his taper on the table, his eye fell upon the blood-stained book, and he uttered an exclamation of astonishment and horror.

“Has this just happened, my lord?” he asked.

“Scarce half an hour ago,” replied Lord Strange. “Shut the book, I pray you, and put it aside.”

Doctor Rutter obeyed, and remarked, as he sat down :

“This portent must not be disregarded, my lord. Be warned, I entreat you. Take no further part in the conflict between the king and the rebellious Parliament, but live in quiet and retirement till the struggle is over. I know my counsel will be unpalatable, but it is prompted by duty to your lordship. After the spectacle I have just beheld, I cannot hold my tongue. Be warned, I repeat. Advance not on this path of danger, or it may lead to your destruction. You may share the fate of Strafford.”

“It may be so,” replied Lord Strange ; “but I shall go on. I would not desert the king at this juncture, even if I were

certain that the direful consequences you predict would ensue."

"I would your fidelity and devotion were better appreciated by his majesty, my lord. All the great efforts you have made for him appear to have been counteracted by his advisers, several of whom are evidently inimical to you."

"You are right," said Lord Strange. "They have persuaded the king that I am ambitious, and have pretensions to the crown like my uncle Ferdinando, and they say I shall desert him as my ancestor, Lord Stanley, deserted Richard the Third at Bosworth Field, when he gave the crown to his son-in-law, the Earl of Richmond. His majesty, therefore, views my conduct with jealousy and suspicion. When I joined him at York, I met with a cold reception, but soon discovered why I was so treated, and strove to disabuse his

mind of his unjust and unfounded suspicions. 'Sire,' I said, 'if it were true that I am plotting against you, I should merit death. Let him who dares charge me with treason stand forth, and I will pick the calumny from his lips with the point of my sword.' Lord Goring, Lord Digby, and Lord Jermyn were present at the time—but not one of them answered the challenge."

"And what said the king?" asked Doctor Rutter.

"He prayed me to have patience; adding, 'this is not a time, when the rebels are marching against me, to quarrel amongst ourselves.'"

"Methinks the rebels themselves must have seen their own advantage in the unworthy treatment thus shown you, my lord," remarked Rutter, "and have sought to win you over."

“You have guessed right,” said Lord Strange. “A despatch was shortly afterwards sent me by Colonel Holland, commander of the garrison in Manchester, stating that he was aware of the great indignity put upon me by the king’s evil counsellors, who were the enemies of the nation, and that if I would engage in the cause of the Parliament, I should have a command equal to my own greatness, or to that of any of my ancestors. My reply to the insolent proposition was prompt and decisive. I bade the messenger tell Colonel Holland, that when he heard I had turned traitor, I would listen to his offers. Till then, if I received such another despatch it would be at the peril of him who brought it.”

“The answer was worthy of you, my lord,” said the chaplain; “and well calculated to put to shame the king’s advisers.

Surely, after this, his majesty could entertain no suspicion of you?"

"An idea once fixed upon the king's mind is not easily removed. My motives have been misrepresented throughout. Thus, when I assembled upwards of sixty thousand efficient men on the moors near Bury, Ormskirk, and Preston, I was authoritatively forbidden to take the command of the force, and these potent auxiliaries were lost to the king, because they would serve no other leader but myself. Many of them went over to the rebels. Had this large force been retained, and augmented as it could have been, the king might have marched on in triumph to London, and have effectually crushed the rebellion."

"'Tis lamentable," remarked Doctor Rutter. "But his majesty's eyes have been blinded."

“Though deeply hurt by the treatment I have experienced,” pursued Lord Strange, “I did not desist from my efforts, but without delay raised three troops of horse, and three regiments of foot, which I armed and equipped, and prepared to join the king at Warrington, where it had been agreed that the royal standard should be reared. Once more the counsels of my enemies prevailed, and to the king’s disadvantage. Warrington, where I am omnipotent, as I need not tell you, was abandoned, and Nottingham chosen, where I have no influence whatever. At the same time, without any reason assigned for the step, I was deprived of the lieutenancy of Cheshire and North Wales, and Lord Rivers was joined in commission with me for Lancashire.”

“I marvel your lordship could forgive

the affront. But I know your loyalty is unchangeable."

"I shall not cease to serve the king faithfully, even though he should continue to requite me with ingratitude," said Lord Strange; "nor shall I abate my zeal, even though his cause should become hopeless. I am now awaiting his majesty's orders to attack Manchester. I could easily have taken the place two months ago, when I seized upon the magazine, and carried off the powder stored within it by Colonel Holland, but I had no orders at the time, and might have been blamed for precipitancy. Since then the town has been fortified by an engineer named Rosworm, and it can now stand a siege."

"Your lordship surprises me," observed Rutter. "Who is this Rosworm, of whom you speak? I have not heard of him."

"A very skilful German engineer, who

has had plenty of experience in his own country, where he served under Wallenstein," replied Lord Strange. "He has been in Ireland, but on the outbreak of the rebellion of the Roman Catholics there, he came to England, and found his way to Manchester, where he has been engaged by Colonel Holland and the other rebel leaders to fortify the town. And he has done his work well. When I first heard of his arrival I sent messengers to offer him double pay if he would serve the king, but he refused to break his engagement with the rebels."

"That speaks well for his honesty at all events," remarked Doctor Rutter.

"Ay, he is a brave fellow, and very skilful, as I have just said," rejoined Lord Strange. "The Manchester men are lucky in securing him. That he will make a good defence of the town I do not doubt,

but I shall take it nevertheless. The difficulty will be to hold it when taken. Manchester is the most important Parliamentary stronghold in the North of England, and every effort will be made by the rebels to recover it. And now, since I have said so much, I will detain you for a few minutes longer while I explain why I have sent for you from the Isle of Man. I did not mean to enter upon the matter till to-morrow, but it seems to me that I had better mention it now while my mind is full of the subject."

"I am prepared to listen to all you may tell me, my lord," observed Doctor Rutter.

"In a word, then," said Lord Strange, "since it is certain the Civil War has begun in Lancashire, and no one can tell how long it may last, or how it may terminate, it is my intention to garrison Lathom House, so that if driven to extremities, I can hold

it for six months or longer against an enemy. The house is as strong as a castle, as you know — indeed, few castles in England are so strong—and from its position, size, fortifications, and broad deep moat, I am confident it will stand a lengthened siege, if provided with sufficient men, ammunition, and ordnance. I shall therefore place three hundred experienced musketeers within the hall, plant cannon of large size on the walls and towers, and provision it for six months. Should I be absent, as may chance, its custody will be committed to my noble and high-spirited wife, in whose veins flows the blood of the Nassaus, and whose courage well fits her for the charge.”

“That I will answer for, my lord,” said the archdeacon. “A braver-hearted lady than Charlotte de la Trémoille, Lady Strange, does not exist. I am impatient to

learn whether your lordship requires me to take any part in the preparations for the defence of Lathom House."

"Thus much, my good friend," replied Lord Strange. "You will aid her ladyship with your councils, and act for her as may be needful and as she may require. On no man's judgment can I place greater reliance than on yours, my good Rutter; and while you are at Lathom, I feel certain all my plans will be fully carried out. Of necessity, I shall be often absent, for I shall have much to do. Her ladyship, as you are aware, is now at Lathom, and will remain there altogether for the present. To-morrow you will join her, and I wish you fully to explain my designs. If I do not receive the order I have been expecting from his majesty to attack Manchester, it is my intention to go to Chester to see my father the Earl of

Derby, who has been very unwell for the last week."

"His lordship, I trust, is not dangerously ill?" observed Doctor Rutter.

"I hope not," said Lord Strange, gravely. "His physician, Doctor Gerard, from whom I hear daily, tells me I need not feel anxious about him, and that he is doing well, but in spite of these assurances, I am uneasy—very uneasy—for he is old and feeble, and might quickly sink."

"It is satisfactory to reflect that the earl has long been prepared to quit this world," observed Rutter, "and having relinquished all his great estates and power has nothing to tie him to earth."

"No, he has long done with the world and its vanities," said Lord Strange. "My beloved mother's death was a severe blow to him, and he has never recovered from it. I marvel not at it, for a better wife and

better mother than Elizabeth Vere, Countess of Derby, never existed. The earl, my father, has never been himself since he lost her. His interest in life was gone—his sole desire being to join her in heaven. No recluse could dwell in greater retirement than he has done, ever since this sad bereavement in his house on the banks of the Dee near Chester. But his sorrows seem now drawing to a close.”

“Where grief is incurable, the grave appears the only refuge,” said Rutter. “Under such circumstances prolongation of life is scarcely to be desired.”

“True,” said Lord Strange. “But we must await the fatal stroke without impatience, and my father, amid all his sufferings, has been perfectly resigned to the will of Heaven. His motive for surrendering his estates to me during his lifetime was that he might pass the remainder of his

days in solitude and prayer. He then firmly believed that his life would not be long, and though he was mistaken, he has never regretted the step. Had he done so, I would have restored everything to him. But he had formed a resolution, like that of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, when he chose a retreat in the monastery of Saint Just, and entirely renounced the world, its business, pleasures, and troubles."

"But he did not, like Charles the Fifth, practise all the rigours of a monastic life," observed Doctor Rutter.

"He has performed no act of penance, for that is no part of his faith," replied Lord Strange; "but he has spent much of his time in religious meditation and prayer. I would I were as well prepared for eternity as my father."

"Your lordship has not much cause for self-reproach," said Doctor Rutter.

"I strive to do right, but I often fall short in my endeavours," replied Lord Strange. "It may be that some day I shall retire altogether from the world like my father."

"That day, I hope, is far distant, my lord," said Doctor Rutter.

Just then footsteps were heard in the adjoining gallery, and immediately afterwards a serving-man made his appearance.

"What wouldst thou, Cuthbert?" demanded Lord Strange.

"An it please your lordship," replied the servant, "a messenger has just arrived from Chester—from the Earl of Derby."

"A messenger from the earl, my father—at this hour!" exclaimed Lord Strange, uneasily. "What news brings he?"

"I cannot say, my lord," replied the man. "He did not deliver his message to

me. But I fear he does not bring good news."

"You alarm me, Cuthbert," cried Lord Strange. "Where is the messenger?"

"Without—in the gallery, my lord. 'Tis Captain Standish."

"Captain Standish! Bid him come in at once."

The order was obeyed, and next moment a tall and remarkably handsome young man, about two or three and twenty, was ushered into the closet.

The new-comer wore a buff coat embroidered with lace, a short cloak, funnel-topped boots of supple leather ascending above the knee, and carried in his hand a broad-leaved Flemish beaver hat, adorned with a rich band and a plume of feathers.

The long dark locks falling upon his shoulders at once proclaimed him a Cava-

lier—the Puritans being already distinguished by their closely cropped hair. His manner and looks were highly prepossessing. Though he had ridden far and fast, he did not seem fatigued by the journey.

On the entrance of Captain Standish, Lord Strange rose to greet him, and looking inquiringly into his face, said :

“Keep me not in suspense, Frank. How is the earl, my father? Does he still live?”

“He does, my lord,” replied Captain Standish. “At all events, he was alive when I left him some three hours ago, and Doctor Gerard assured me that he is in no immediate danger, though he cannot last long.”

“Did you see him?” inquired Lord Strange, eagerly and anxiously. “How looked he? Was he sensible?”

“Perfectly sensible, my lord,” replied Standish. “His sole desire seemed to be to behold your lordship once more ere he died, and bid you a last farewell. I offered to set off forthwith and convey his dying wishes to your lordship, and he thanked me much, but added, ‘If my son has aught to do for the king that demands his presence, bid him not mind me. I know he will come if he can. Should aught hinder him, or should he not arrive in time, I shall die content.’ ”

“Heaven grant I may not be too late!” cried Lord Strange. “I will start as soon as horses can be got ready. You have done me a great service, Frank, and I shall not forget it. While you refresh yourself after your ride, a bed shall be got ready for you.”

“I will drink a cup of wine in the hall, and snatch a mouthful of food,” replied

Standish; "but if your lordship will furnish me with a fresh horse, for mine is somewhat jaded, I will go back with you to Chester."

"You had best go to bed," said Lord Strange. "You have done work enough for to-night."

"I pray your lordship to let me have my way," said the young man. "I shall not feel that I have fulfilled my promise to the earl, your father, unless I bring you back to him. Besides, I have done nothing. I could ride thirty more miles before day-break, and not be the worse for it. I only require a fresh horse."

"And that you shall have," said Lord Strange. "Since you are bent upon going with me, I will not hinder you. Hark, thee, Cuthbert," he added to the manservant, who remained in the closet waiting his noble master's orders; "let refreshments

be got ready instantly by some of thy fellows for Captain Standish, and while this is being done, go to the stables, and cause my best hunter to be saddled for me. Another strong horse will be required for Captain Standish. Two grooms will go with me, and half a dozen armed attendants. And mark me well!—the utmost expedition must be used.”

“In less than quarter of the hour the horses shall be at the hall-door, my lord,” replied Cuthbert, preparing to depart.

“Go with him, Frank,” said Lord Strange, “and make the best supper you can. I will join you in the dining-hall anon.”

And as Captain Standish quitted the closet, his lordship turned to the archdeacon, who had listened to the foregoing discourse in silence.

“Only a few minutes ago we were talking of my father,” he said. “I little thought

that I should so soon receive this sad intelligence respecting him. Yet it does not surprise me, for I have long been expecting the summons. I must now prepare for my departure; but before doing so, I will write a brief letter to Lady Strange, which you will deliver to her on the morrow. The news will afflict her much, for she loved my father tenderly."

"I will offer her all the consolation in my power," said Doctor Rutter. And adding that he would await his lordship in the hall, he quitted the closet.

Left alone, Lord Strange fastened the door that he might not be interrupted, and then knelt down and prayed fervently for his dying father, imploring Heaven that he might be permitted to see him again while life remained.

II.

LORD STRANGE.

THIS supplication made, Lord Strange arose, and wrote a few lines full of tenderness and affection to his wife. Having sealed the letter, he proceeded to his dressing-room.

Hastily exchanging his loose gown for a black velvet doublet embroidered with silver, and his pantoufles for riding-boots, he slipped a rich baldrick over his right shoulder, while his sword, his black plumed

hat, and gloves were brought him by a valet who was in attendance.

Thus attired, he presented a noble figure.

Lord Strange was then in the full perfection of manhood, being in his thirty-eighth year. Though not above the middle height, he possessed a strong and well-proportioned frame. His features were handsome, the nose prominent but well formed, and the eyes large and black. His complexion was dark, and the habitual expression of his countenance grave and somewhat melancholy.

A face full of intelligence and power. One peculiarity must be noticed, as shown in Vandyke's fine portrait. The brow was almost hidden by the dark hair brought over it; but, perhaps, the arrangement suited the physiognomy. Certainly the long dark locks falling upon the shoulders became the wearer well.

Lord Strange had a proud and martial bearing. Trained as a soldier, he was well qualified for a command. What he lacked was experience, since he had not yet served in a regular campaign. Brave, yet not rash, he was somewhat fiery, but generous and chivalrous. As already intimated, he carried devotion to the king to its utmost extent. Though studious, Lord Strange was exceedingly active and fond of all manly sports—hunting and hawking were his delight. Ordinarily his manner was haughty and reserved, but towards his dependents and retainers he was very affable. So popular was he with the common folk, that they were wont to say of him in after days, as had been said of his fathers before him, “God bless the king and the Earl of Derby!”

James Stanley, Lord Strange, eldest son of William, sixth Earl of Derby, who

was great-grandson of Mary, daughter of Henry the Seventh, claimed kindred with the Lancasters, Plantagenets, Tudors, and Stuarts, and it was his royal descent, vast possessions, and great territorial influence that had excited the jealousy of Charles the First — a jealousy, kept alive and heightened by that monarch's ill-chosen favourites and councillors, most of whom were hostile to Lord Strange.

When a very young man, being on his travels, Lord Strange visited the Hague, where Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, daughter of James the First, held her court, and he then first beheld his destined bride, the beautiful and accomplished Charlotte de la Trémoille, whose family was as illustrious as his own. Daughter of Claude Duke de Thouars, by Charlotte Brabantine de Nassau, daughter of William Prince of Orange, Charlotte de la Trémoille was

likewise grand-daughter of Charlotte de Bourbon, of the royal house of Montpensier, and was therefore in every respect a suitable match for the heir of the great house of Stanley. The nuptial ceremony, conducted with great magnificence, took place in a palace of the Prince of Orange at the Hague, in the presence of the King and Queen of Bohemia and other royal and noble personages.

Shortly afterwards, the young lord brought his lovely bride to London, and she appeared as one of the chief ornaments of the court of Queen Henrietta Maria.

At this time, Lord Strange lived with great splendour — his father, the Earl of Derby, disconsolate at the loss of his wife, having surrendered his estates to him — gave sumptuous entertainments, and became a patron of artists, men of science and letters. Vandyke, whom he had known

in Holland, received most flattering attention from him. But the king looked coldly upon the powerful noble, and unable to brook this treatment, Lord Strange retired to his seats in Lancashire.

Lady Strange, who was devotedly attached to her lord, and whose good sense equalled her personal attractions, expressed no regret at quitting the court, though she stood very high in the queen's favour, and was greatly admired for her beauty and wit. Indeed, she found herself a person of far more importance at Lathom House and Knowsley, than she had been at Whitehall, and at Castle Rushen, in the Isle of Man, of which her husband was supreme lord, she was a queen.

Both at Lathom House and Knowsley, Lord Strange kept up princely establishments, and revived the magnificent doings of his ancestor, Edward, the third Earl of Derby, of whom it was said by Camden,

“that with his death, the glory of hospitality seemed to fall asleep.” This almost regal mode of life, which was represented as a sort of rivalry, greatly offended the king.

Completely neglected by the Court, but still practising the extraordinary hospitality just described, Lord Strange continued to reside in Lancashire, or at his castle in the Isle of Man, for several years, during which his power and influence underwent no diminution, but rather increased.

Unquestionably, he was the most powerful nobleman in the North of England at the outbreak of the Civil War. Banishing all thought of the treatment he had experienced, he listened only to the dictates of loyalty and devotion, by which his breast had been ever animated, and at once offered his services to the king. How his motives were misconstrued, and his efforts paralysed, has been shown.

As Lord Strange marched along the great gallery, preceded by a servant bearing a light, his eye fell upon the portraits of his ancestors lining the walls.

There was Thomas Lord Stanley, first Earl of Derby, who married the widow of the Earl of Richmond, and mother of Henry the Seventh ; Thomas, grandson of the first earl, and perhaps the most distinguished of the illustrious line ; Edward, third earl, lord high steward at the coronation of Mary, and chamberlain of Chester in Elizabeth's time, who married a daughter of the Duke of Norfolk ; Henry, fourth earl, who espoused the granddaughter of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, and Mary, widow of Louis the Twelfth of France, and Sister to Henry the Eighth ; Ferdinando, fifth earl, said to be poisoned by the Jesuits ; and, lastly, William, sixth earl, who succeeded his

brother Ferdinando, and had married Elizabeth de Vere, daughter of the Earl of Oxford.

Lord Strange paused for a moment before the portrait of his sire, a stately-looking personage in the costume of Elizabeth's time, and wearing the order of the Garter. Well-nigh half a century had elapsed since that portrait was painted, and the earl was young and handsome then.

How looked he now? Lord Strange could not help asking himself the question. Beside Earl William was his countess, whose marvellous beauty explained his incurable grief at her loss.

It might be fancy—nay, it must have been!—but as Lord Strange contemplated these portraits, they seemed to gaze mournfully at him, and to follow him with their looks as he went on.

Descending the great oak staircase, he

reached the hall, where he found Archdeacon Rutter, and gave him the letter for Lady Strange, charging him with some further affectionate messages to her.

By this time Captain Standish had finished his hasty repast, and was quite ready to attend upon his lordship.

In another part of the hall, and not far from the entrance, stood the porter, with some half-dozen serving-men in rich liveries, and they now threw open the great door.

But Lord Strange could not depart without a word to old Randal Fermor, the steward, who had risen from his couch to receive his lordship's parting commands.

The old man now approached. Having filled the same office in the time of Earl Ferdinando, he had been continued in it ever since. He was greatly attached to Earl William, and the tidings just received of

his lordship's critical condition had greatly grieved him.

As he drew near, he said to Lord Strange :

"Had I been able to ride so far, I would have prayed your lordship to allow me to accompany you to Chester. I should like to have seen my old master once more ere he goes hence."

"Willingly would I have granted thy request, Randal, hadst thou been equal to the journey," said Lord Strange. "But I will mention thy wish to my father, should he be living when I arrive. He had ever a great regard for thee."

"I know it—I feel it!" cried the old steward, scarcely able to repress his emotion. "There was no one whom I loved and honoured so much as my old master—your lordship excepted. May he meet his

reward in heaven, and his portion be with the blessed! He was the kindest and best of men, as well as the most noble-hearted."

"Thou say'st truly, Randal," observed Lord Strange, much moved. "Nor can we rightly estimate his loss. But we are speaking of him as if he was gone—whereas, it may please the Almighty to spare him yet awhile."

"He is too good for this wicked world, my lord," cried old Randal, fairly bursting into tears, "and is better out of it!"

"At any rate, he is well prepared for his departure," said Lord Strange. "And now fare thee well! I commit all to thy charge during my absence, and I do so with perfect confidence, for thou hast ever been a faithful steward to me and mine. He who is going will bear witness for thee above!"

The old steward pressed his lips to the hand extended to him.

The servants formed themselves into two lines as Lord Strange went forth followed by Captain Standish. A powerful steed, held by a groom, was standing close by the steps, and his lordship had no sooner mounted than another horse was brought for Standish.

A bright moonlight night. Where the beams fell every object could be clearly discerned. A large portion of the court-yard, however, was buried in shade. Still, the picturesque outline of the mansion, with its gables and large bay windows, was fully revealed.

The armed escort was in attendance, and at the head of this little troop Lord Strange rode out of the court-yard, and proceeded towards the park, through which he meant to shape his course.

On this side the palatial mansion was seen to the greatest advantage, and it could not

have looked better than it did on that lovely night. So exquisite was the scene, that it extorted Frank Standish's admiration.

Knowsley Hall was then a large irregular pile, additions to the original structure having been made at various times, but its very irregularity gave it a charm. Open at the front, it had two large wings, and at the rear beyond the inner court were extensive out-buildings. On the left of the main building was a chapel, that might almost be described as a church, since it was very lofty, and had large windows filled with the richest stained glass.

On this side were the gardens laid out in the old-fashioned style, with terraces—each terrace being bordered by a row of clipped yew-trees—very formal, but very beautiful. At the foot of these slopes was a large sheet of water—almost a lake—that materially added to the beauty of the place.]

Beyond was the park—then full of magnificent old timber, the growth of centuries, and abounding in deer.

The turrets and walls of the ancient mansion were now bathed in moonlight, and the surface of the miniature lake glittered in the silvery beams.

Lord Strange had just entered the park, and was about to quicken his pace, when a groom, who had ridden on in advance, came back to say that a party of horsemen was approaching; and in another minute the little troop came in sight.

It consisted of a small detachment of dragoons, with an officer at their head, whose splendid accoutrements showed he belonged to the royal guard. As he drew nearer, Lord Strange recognised him as Captain Galliard, with whom he was well acquainted, and halted to greet him. “Your lordship is fortunately encountered,”

said Captain Galliard. "I was coming to Knowsley. I have a despatch for you from his majesty."

And with these words he presented a letter to Lord Strange.

"Can you tell me the purport of his missive, colonel?" demanded his lordship.

"I can, my lord," replied Galliard; "and I might have delivered the message verbally, but his majesty deemed it more fitting to write. Your lordship is commanded to attend the king without delay at Nottingham Castle."

"I would instantly obey the command, colonel," said Lord Strange; "but I have just received another summons, that cannot be neglected."

"How, my lord!" exclaimed Galliard. "The king's commands are paramount to all other—or should be so."

“I am ready at all times to sacrifice life and fortune for the king, but there are appeals to which even his majesty’s commands must give way. Such is mine, as you yourself, I am sure, will admit, when I tell you I have just been summoned to my father’s death-bed.”

“I have just arrived from Chester, colonel,” interposed Standish. “The Earl of Derby will scarce depart in peace unless he beholds his son.”

“No more need be said,” remarked Captain Galliard, feelingly. “I will report what I have heard to the king. His majesty, I am certain, will deeply sympathise with your lordship.”

“I will join him at Nottingham as soon as I can,” said Lord Strange. “Having rendered this explanation I must now press on to Chester, or I may arrive too late. Proceed to Knowsley, I pray you, colonel,

and take a few hours' rest after your long journey. My steward will see to all your wants."

"I will take advantage of your lordship's offer," said Captain Galliard. "In good truth, we all—men and horses—need rest and refreshment."

"Farewell, then," said Lord Strange. "I hope we may meet again under happier circumstances."

With this, he galloped off, followed by Captain Standish and his attendants, while Captain Galliard and his men proceeded to Knowsley Hall, where they were very hospitably received by old Randal Fermor.

III.

THE DYING EARL.

PASSING through Prescott, and crossing the old bridge over the Mersey at Warrington, built by the first Earl of Derby, Lord Strange and his attendants rode on at a rapid pace through Daresbury to Frodsham, where they roused the host of the Bear's Paw, and halted for a few minutes to refresh their steeds.

This done, they galloped off again, and skirting the wide marshes between them and the Mersey, kept as near as they could to a range of lofty hills ; then tracking

the boundaries of Delamere Forest, they speeded on through Plemston and Mickle Trafford.

Day was just breaking as they approached Chester, and the castle and cathedral, with some of the loftier buildings, could be seen overtopping the walls of the ancient and picturesque city.

Shut and guarded during the night, the gates were not opened at that early hour, but it was not Lord Strange's intention to enter the city.

Turning off on the right, he crossed the Roodee, where for upwards of a century races had been run, and jousts and other chivalrous sports held, and rode on till he came to a large mansion, situated on the banks of the river Dee.

"Is the earl, my father, still alive, Hyde?" cried Lord Strange to the porter,

who came forth to meet him, as he rode up to the gateway.

“He is, my lord,” replied Hyde; “but I fear he is rapidly sinking.”

“Heaven be thanked I am in time,” exclaimed his lordship.

And, springing from his horse, he entered the house.

Few of the household had retired to rest on that night, and Lord Strange found Warburton, the butler, and three or four other servants, collected in the hall, expecting his arrival.

Warburton gave the same report of the earl's condition that Hyde, the porter, had done, stating that he had just been in his lordship's room with some chicken broth, but he would not touch it.

“Doctor Gerard, the physician, and Mr. Hargrave, the chaplain, are now with him,

my lord," said the butler ; "and I could tell what they thought by their looks."

"Take me at once to the chamber, Warburton," said Lord Strange.

In a large carved oak bedstead, with heavy hangings, propped up by pillows, lay the dying earl.

His countenance still retained its noble outline, but the features were thin and sharpened and of a deathly hue.

His hands were clasped upon his breast, his eyes turned upwards, and he was evidently repeating a prayer, which Mr. Hargrave, the chaplain, an elderly man, seated near the bedside, was reading to him.

The tapers that had been burning throughout the night had only just been extinguished, and the window curtains drawn back, so as to admit the light of day, but the early sunbeams that fell upon the

arras and oak panels gave no cheerfulness to the room. On the contrary, they made the picture even more painful by force of contrast.

In a large easy-chairs at Doctor Gerard, apparently dozing, but ever and anon he opened his eyes to look towards the bed.

The entrance of Lord Strange was so quiet that it did not attract the earl's notice, and he remained for some moments gazing at his father.

During this interval, Doctor Gerard, receiving a sign to that effect, did not quit his seat, and Mr. Hargrave went on with the prayer.

At length Lord Strange advanced towards the bed, and taking the earl's hand said :

“ Father, I am here.”

Something like a smile lighted up the dying nobleman's pallid countenance.

“I knew you would come, my son,” he murmured.

“Shall we leave the room, my lord?” inquired the chaplain, addressing Lord Strange. “The earl has something to say to you in private.”

“I pray you do so, good Master Hargrave,” said Lord Strange. “But remain without with Doctor Gerard,” he added in a lower tone.

The chaplain bowed and went out with the physician.

“We are alone, father,” said Lord Strange.

“Come as near to me as you can, or you will not hear my words,” said the earl, placing his arm over his son’s neck, and regarding him with a loving and pitying look. “I am much troubled in mind concerning you. It seems to me that I can look into the future, and I have a sad foreboding

that all your possessions will be taken from you, and that a tragical death awaits you."

"Let not that trouble you, father," said Lord Strange. "If such is my destiny, it cannot be avoided. I trust I shall be able to meet death firmly in whatever shape it may come. Be sure I shall never die dishonoured."

"But why pursue a course that appears certain to lead to this end, my son? Why sacrifice yourself for a king who rewards you with ingratitude? Retire to the Isle of Man, where you can dwell securely till this struggle is over. By taking a prominent part in it, you will gain nothing, and may lose all."

"I cannot follow your counsel, father," replied Lord Strange. "Be the consequences what they may, I will not desert

the king. I should tarnish my name were I to withdraw from him now."

"Not so, my son," rejoined the earl. "The course I point out is the only one left you. The king trusts you not, but listens to your enemies, and will never believe in your professions of loyalty. 'Tis in vain, therefore, that you attempt to serve him. You have nothing but mortification and disappointment to expect. Why throw away life for one who treats you thus? Fight not against him, but fight not for him."

"I can make no promise, my lord. His majesty has just sent for me, and what he commands I shall do."

"Make any excuses rather than go to him," said the earl. "You will not disobey my dying injunctions!"

"I ought to be with his majesty now,

my lord—but I am here,” replied Lord Strange, somewhat evasively.

“Remain here, I charge you, my son—at least for some days after my death,” said the earl, solemnly and authoritatively.

“Ask me not more than I am able to perform, father,” rejoined Lord Strange, evidently a prey to conflicting emotions. “Enjoin aught I can do, and your wishes shall be fulfilled.”

“My wishes have been expressed,” said the earl, somewhat reproachfully; “and since you refuse to comply with them, there is no need of further speech. Oh! that you could see into the future as plainly as I can!”

“If I have offended you, father, I humbly crave your pardon,” said Lord Strange.

“Nay, I have nothing to pardon, my

dear son," said the dying nobleman. "My sole desire is to preserve you from danger. Take my blessing. Say farewell for me to your wife and children. Fain would I have seen them once more—but it may not be! We shall all meet in heaven."

While he uttered these words, a change came over the earl's countenance that could not be mistaken. He sank back upon the pillow and immediately expired.

Half an hour had elapsed, when the door was opened, and those outside were invited to enter the chamber of death. With the chaplain and physician were Frank Standish and Warburton, the butler. None were surprised to find that all was over.

"Let me be first to salute your lordship as Earl of Derby," said Standish, bowing deeply as he came in.

"I do not desire the title in this pre-

sence," rejoined the new earl. "Approach the bed, I pray you, good Master Hargrave, and you will see how calm my father looks. He might be in a placid slumber."

"He has died the death of the righteous," said the chaplain. "His life has been a long preparation for the final hour, and it has found him prepared."

Bending down he took the hand of the departed, and pressed his lips to it. His example was followed by the others, but no one seemed so profoundly affected as Warburton.

The new earl witnessed this touching scene in silence, and then giving some needful orders to the butler, and directing that the household should be admitted to view the body of their deceased lord, he withdrew to an adjoining chamber, where he penned a despatch to the king, acquainting him with the sad event, and adding that he

hoped to join his majesty at Nottingham on the morrow.

He then wrote a few lines to his wife, and having sent off messengers with the letters, threw himself upon a couch, quite worn out with anxiety and fatigue.

After a few hours' slumber, the new Earl of Derby arose, and had an immediate conference with Mr. Hargrave.

"I am compelled to attend the king at Nottingham," he said, "and must therefore commit the management of my father's funeral to you. The body will lie in state for four days, and should I not return in that interval, you will cause it to be conveyed, without pomp or ceremony, according to the wishes of the departed, to the church of Ormskirk, there to be deposited in our family vault beneath the Derby chapel by the side of my angelic mother."

“Your lordship may rely on me,” replied the chaplain. “On the fifth day, the interment shall take place at Ormskirk, as you have directed.”

IV.

PRINCE RUPERT.

BEFORE setting out for Nottingham, the Earl of Derby again visited the chamber of the dead, and looked his last upon his father's face.

With a mournful heart he then mounted his steed, and rode off, accompanied by Captain Standish and the armed attendants he had brought with him.

For more than an hour he spoke not a word, and seemed occupied in painful

reflections. He then made an effort to rouse himself, but speedily relapsed into silence, and continued in the same melancholy mood till they reached Mansfield, where they halted for the night.

Next morning, the earl resumed his journey, and the sight of Nottingham Castle, seated on a precipitous rock, overlooking the portion of Sherwood Forest across which he was riding, filled him with emotions very different from those he had experienced on the previous day, and in some degree dispelled his gloom.

Above the fortress could be seen the royal standard. Proudly it floated now, but an ill omen had attended its first display. Reared on the castle during a storm, it was speedily blown down; nor could it be set up again till the fury of the storm had abated, when it was placed on the keep.

The Earl of Derby did not forget this

inauspicious circumstance, and it surprised him to find that the castle was not more strongly fortified, since he was aware the Parliament had a body of five hundred infantry and fifteen hundred horse at Coventry. There were no cannon on the walls, and very few musketeers.

While he mounted the steep ascent leading to the gateway, trumpets were sounded and drums beaten, and a troop of horse came forth, their helmets and cuirasses glittering in the sun. They were a remarkably fine body of men, and very well mounted.

Their leader was a very striking personage, and instantly attracted Lord Derby's attention, who knew him at a glance.

The Cavalier in question was very tall, and possessed a spare but well-knit and vigorous frame. His dark stern visage was lighted up by eyes that seemed capable of the

fiercest expression. He had a thoroughly military bearing, and no one could look at him without seeing that, young as he was, he had served in many a campaign.

He wore a richly-embroidered buff coat, encircled by a crimson scarf, and crossed by a magnificent baldrick, from which a long sword depended. Riding-boots ascending above the knee, and a broad-leaved Spanish hat, ornamented with a plume of white feathers, completed his costume. His fiery steed seemed proud of his rider.

In this haughty Cavalier Lord Derby instantly recognised Prince Rupert, the king's nephew, and the brother of the Elector-Palatine. Prince Rupert had been appointed general-in-chief of the royal cavalry quartered at Leicester.

As the prince's quick eye alighted on the earl, he checked his impatient steed in order to speak to him. Hitherto they had

seen little of each other, though Rupert was a relative of the countess ; but Lord Derby had a genuine admiration of the prince, whose daring and military skill he fully appreciated ; while Rupert, though sharing the king's belief that Lord Derby nourished ambitious designs, did full justice to his noble qualities.

Courteous salutations passed between them ; but Prince Rupert's manner was necessarily grave, as he thus addressed the earl :

“ I have to offer your lordship my sincere condolence on the death of the noble earl your father. Intelligence of the sad event was received by his majesty this morning, and he immediately communicated it to me. I own that I scarcely thought your lordship would come hither at a season of such heavy affliction ; but I did not estimate aright your devotion to the king. In truth,

he has great need of your services. 'Tis not too much to say that you alone can put down the rebels in Lancashire, and I doubt not you will quickly do it."

"Two months ago I could have crushed the rebellion in that county without difficulty, your highness," replied the earl; "but now things are changed. Manchester and Bolton are both strongly fortified and well garrisoned."

"I know it, my lord," replied Prince Rupert. "But neither town can hold out long against you, if you are resolved to take it."

"Manchester will make an obstinate resistance," remarked the earl.

"If it should be so, put the whole garrison to the sword," said the prince, sternly. "Spare none. Too much leniency has been shown the rebels. But you will receive your orders from the king. You will find Lord

Molineux and Sir Thomas Tyldesley with him. I am going to Leicester. Farewell, my lord. Remember me, I pray you, to my cousin, the countess. I hope soon to hear you are master of Manchester."

As Prince Rupert rode down the hill, Lord Derby and his followers passed through the gateway of the castle.

V.

CHARLES THE FIRST.

THE Earl of Derby expected to find the court thronged with musketeers and pikemen, but very few soldiers were to be seen. Half a dozen yeomen of the guard, bearing partisans, were stationed at the entrance to that part of the castle occupied by the king and his suite.

Having dismounted, the earl proceeded thither followed by Frank Standish, and was ceremoniously conducted by a groom

of the chambers and some other officers of the household to the royal apartments.

Frank Standish remained in the guard-chamber, where several other persons were waiting, but the earl was at once taken to the king's cabinet.

At a table covered with papers and despatches sat Charles. Why attempt to depict the features of the unfortunate monarch, since all are familiar with them, and can summon up his image at will? Suffice it to say, that although the king looked grave and melancholy, his countenance did not want the placidity that habitually characterised it.

His habiliments were of black velvet, and a falling band, deeply edged with lace, served to set off his noble head.

With the king were the two persons re-

ferred to by Prince Rupert—both of whom were friends of Lord Derby.

Viscount Molineux of Maryborough was a fine-looking young man, and had quite the air of a Cavalier. Sir Thomas Tyldesley of Mierscough Lodge, near Lancaster, and the representative of an old Lancashire family, was likewise a handsome man, but somewhat older and more robust than his companion. Both were accoutred in steel breastplates and tassets, and each had a long sword suspended from a baldrick.

As the Earl of Derby went to kiss the king's hand, his majesty said earnestly :

“My lord, I thank you for coming to me now. I take it as a proof of your devotion.”

“Your majesty is well aware that I am ever ready to obey your behests,” replied the earl. “In staying to receive my father's

last sigh, I felt sure I should not incur your majesty's displeasure."

"I should have been sorry if you had done otherwise, my lord," said Charles; "and if you had tarried to lay your father in the tomb, I should not have blamed you, however much I might regret your absence. I have urgent need of your services. The rebellion is making rapid progress in Lancashire, and must be checked. No one can accomplish this so effectually as yourself, since no one has such power and influence as you have in the county. I have been consulting with Lord Molineux and Sir Thomas Tyldesley, and they entirely agree with me that to your lordship alone ought the task to be entrusted."

"Such is our opinion, sire," observed Lord Molineux. "No one can raise so large a force in Lancashire as the Earl of Derby."

“That is quite certain,” added Sir Thomas Tyldesley. “Your majesty will recollect that his lordship once raised sixty thousand men, and what has been done before may be done again.”

“Not now, Sir Thomas,” said the earl. “I doubt if a third of the number may be got together. Had your majesty deigned to follow my advice, and raised your standard at Warrington instead of here, at Nottingham, you would now have a large army. Instead of this, I fear that very few have responded to your proclamation.”

“Few, indeed,” said the king. “I have only three hundred infantry and some militia brought me by the Sheriff of Nottinghamshire.”

“Not more, sire?” exclaimed the earl, startled.

“At Leicester I have eight hundred horse,” pursued the king. “Prince Rupert

has just been here, and urges me strongly to quit this castle, representing to me that I am in great danger from the Parliamentary forces at Coventry. But I cannot retire from Nottingham."

"I observe there is no cannon on the walls," said Lord Derby. "Should an attack be made on the castle how can you resist it? I beseech your majesty to retire in time, or you may fall into the hands of the enemy. Lathom House is fortified, and would stand a siege. Take possession of it, sire. I will undertake to raise you two thousand foot and a thousand horse. With these you can hold out against the rebels till you can get together an army, and give them battle."

"I have planted my standard at Nottingham," replied the king; "and at Nottingham I will remain. I will not trust myself in Lancashire—unless at the head

of an army, and it seems you cannot muster six thousand men."

"The large force I had mustered has dwindled away," said Lord Derby.

"Most of them have joined the rebels," observed Lord Molineux.

The Earl of Derby looked grave.

"I have come here in obedience to your summons, sire," he said. "How can I serve you?"

"I may ask more than your lordship can perform," said the king. "My desire is, that you should crush the rebellion in Lancashire, and begin with Manchester. Can you do this?"

"I have every confidence that I can carry out your wishes, sire," replied the earl. "But I doubt not the garrison at Manchester will be strongly reinforced by the Parliament. I may not, therefore, be able to accomplish the task as quickly as you

expect. I believe the town is fully prepared for a siege."

"Lord Molineux and Sir Thomas Tyldesley have just told me so, but I can scarcely credit it," remarked the king.

"A German engineer, named Rosworm, has thoroughly fortified the town, sire," said Sir Thomas Tyldesley.

"There will be this advantage in the siege, sire, that it will distract the attention of the enemy from Nottingham," observed the Earl of Derby. "What I most dread is that your majesty should be attacked. Once more I beg you to let me bring you all the aid I can."

"I will send to you, if it should be necessary," said Charles. "Lord Southampton, Culpepper, and others of my council suggest that I should propose terms of peace in order to gain time—but I like not the plan."

“’Tis good advice, my liege,” rejoined the Earl of Derby. “Much may be done while the question is discussed, and if some successes are gained in Lancashire, the present posture of affairs may be wholly changed.”

“I will not revoke my proclamation, or lower my tone,” said the king.

“It is not necessary to do so, sire,” rejoined the earl. “But if the overtures of peace should be rejected by the Parliament, the indignation of the people will be roused, and troops will be more easily raised.”

“You convince me by your reasoning, my lord,” said Charles.

“And now I must pray your majesty to permit my immediate departure,” said the earl. “Since active measures are resolved upon, no time should be lost in putting them in execution. Ere long, I trust to

give you a good account of my proceedings."

"I am with you, my lord, unless his majesty has aught more to say to me," observed Lord Molineux.

"And I," added Sir Thomas Tyldesley. "I must not be absent when Manchester is to be beseiged."

"I am sorry to part with you, my lord," said Charles. "But I will not detain you."

With a profound reverence, Lord Derby quitted the cabinet followed by Lord Molineux, and Sir Thomas Tyldesley.

In the ante-chamber they found Frank Standish, who easily perceived from the earl's looks that he was far from satisfied with his reception by the king; and the impression was confirmed when he learnt that Lord Derby intended to depart forthwith.

Without a moment's needless delay, the

earl quitted Nottingham Castle with his friends, who accompanied him to Chester.

Since the opportunity was offered Lord Derby of attending his father's funeral, he caused the ceremonial to be performed on the following day, and laid the late earl's remains in the vault beneath the Stanley Chapel in Ormskirk Church.

VI.

COLONEL ROSWORM.

IN an inner room of an old black and white timber and plaster house situated in a street near the Collegiate Church in Manchester, were two persons.

One of them, whose accoutrements proclaimed him an officer of rank in the Parliamentary army, was Colonel Richard Holland, commander of the garrison and governor of the town. He had strongly marked features, and an authoritative man-

ner, though on the present occasion he had somewhat relaxed his importance.

His companion, unmistakably a foreigner, was no other than the redoubted German engineer, of whom mention has been previously made.

Colonel Rosworm was about fifty, and had served under Wallenstein during the Thirty Years' War. But he appeared none the worse for the hardships he had undergone. His cheeks had been gashed at the battle of Lutzen, but this circumstance only heightened the manly character of his physiognomy, and indeed the scar was almost hidden by a bushy red beard. Though his look was determined and somewhat stern, his manner was distinguished by military frankness.

He could not be called handsome but his features were well formed, and his figure strong and well-proportioned. He

did not exceed the middle height, but bore himself so well that he looked tall.

Such was the famous German engineer, to whom the defence of Manchester against the Royalists and malignants, as they were termed, had been entrusted by those belonging to the Puritan faction. That he was equal to the task seemed now conclusively proved by the effectual manner in which he had fortified the town—surrounding it entirely with mud walls, and protecting the entrances with stout posts, chains, and barricades. Colonel Rosworm's plan was entirely satisfactory to the Parliamentary governor of the town, and he gave it his unqualified commendation.

The house in which we find the engineer and the governor belonged to the former. He had occupied it ever since he arrived in the town from Ireland. It was a small

habitation, but quite large enough for himself and his daughter. Colonel Rosworm was a widower, having lost his wife some years ago. But she had left him a most lovely girl, whom he guarded with as much vigilance as he would have done a fortress.

Gertrude Rosworm, at the period of our story, was just nineteen, and remarkable for her personal attractions. Her profuse flaxen locks, summer blue eyes, delicately fair complexion, and graceful figure won her many admirers among the youth of the town, but none of them were allowed by her jealous father to approach her. However, further description of her must be deferred till she appears on the scene.

Colonel Rosworm was closeted with the governor in a small room opening from the house place, which enjoyed the advantage of a bay window looking into the street.

The walls were garnished with pikes,

swords, muskets, and petronels, and several pieces of armour and steel caps were hung up ready for use.

Colonel Rosworm wore a buff coat and boots, but had relieved himself of his sword and pistols. On the table beside them was a flask of claret and a couple of tall glasses.

They were talking of a banquet given some six weeks ago by a gentleman of Manchester to Lord Derby—then Lord Strange—at which time a tumult occurred in the town when several persons were killed.

“This disastrous affair may be regarded as the commencement of the Civil War in Manchester,” observed the governor. “But I do not think Lord Strange altogether in fault. The provocation came from our side, and I am thankful to say I had nothing to do with it.”

“The occurrence took place just before my arrival,” remarked Colonel Rosworm,

who spoke the language perfectly, though with a strong German accent; "but it does not appear that Lord Strange had any designs upon the town."

"He merely came to attend a grand banquet given in his honour," replied the governor. "Sir Richard Girlington, sheriff of the county, Lord Molineux, Sir Gilbert Hoghton, Sir Alexander Radcliffe, Sir Thomas Prestwich, Sir Edward Mosley, of Alport Lodge, Sir Thomas Tyldesley, Mr. Farrington, of Worden, and several other Royalist gentlemen were present, but all might have passed off quietly if Colonel Holcroft and Colonel Birch had not marched into the town with a large party of men, armed with pikes and muskets, and struck up their drums in the market-place to call out the militia."

"That was certain to cause an affray," remarked Rosworm. "Perhaps they merely

meant to disturb the party at the banquet."

"I suspect they had a deeper design," said the governor. "But be that as it may, they were interrupted by the sheriff, who quitted the banquet, and suddenly appeared in the market-place with a few followers, and ordered them in the king's name to lay down their arms, and keep the peace. They refused, and the sheriff was unable to enforce compliance. Meanwhile Lord Strange, with Lord Molineux, Sir Thomas Tyldesley, and the rest of the gentlemen likewise quitted the banquet, and came to the sheriff's assistance. A sharp conflict took place in the streets, during which several men were killed on both sides, but it ended in the discomfiture of Holcroft and Birch. The latter would have been shot, had he not taken refuge under a cart. Lord Strange and his friends were highly

incensed, and declared it was a treacherous design to assassinate them. Next morning the chief persons of the town waited upon his lordship, who was a guest of Sir Alexander Radcliffe, of Ordsall Hall, to express their great regret at the occurrence."

"Had Lord Strange chosen, he could easily have taken the town at that time, and carried off the magazine," observed Rosworm. "But now we are secure from attack."

"We shall not be left long in peace," said the governor. "Lord Strange has just succeeded his father and is now Earl of Derby. I hear he is raising a large body of men."

"Most probably he will march to the king's assistance," rejoined Rosworm.

"If I am rightly informed he has received orders from his majesty to besiege this town," said Colonel Holland. "We

may therefore expect a visit from him shortly."

"Come when he may he will find us prepared," said Rosworm. "But if your excellency apprehends an immediate attack it may be well to provision the town, and get in all the men you can from Bury, Rochdale, and the neighbouring places."

"I have sent scouts to Warrington where the earl now is," said the governor, "and expect to receive precise information to-morrow. Meanwhile, no precautions must be neglected."

"Strict watch shall be kept to-night on the ramparts and at the gates," rejoined Rosworm. "I myself will visit the sentinels, and see that they do not neglect their duty. If aught occurs alarm bells shall be rung, and a light displayed from the church tower."

"You have not served under the great

Wallenstein without learning something, colonel," observed the governor, with a smile.

"I have learnt that he who guards a fortress must not sleep at night," said Rosworm. "Depend upon it the enemy shall not take us unawares."

At this moment the door was partly opened, and a pleasant voice inquired:

"May I come in, father?"

Rosworm answered in the affirmative, and Gertrude entered.

VII.

GERTRUDE ROSWORM.

HER presence seemed to light up the little room. A lovely blonde with the fairest tresses, and the tenderest blue eyes imaginable. A glance from those blue eyes possessed an almost resistless witchery. Figure slight and symmetrical. She was simply, yet very becomingly attired. On her head she wore a coverchief, her flaxen locks were wholly unconfined, and allowed to flow over her shoulders. A

kerchief covered her neck ; a girdle, totally destitute of ornament, spanned her slender waist ; and her gown, worn long enough to conceal her small feet, was made of the plainest stuff. No ornament whatever.

As she entered the room, the governor rose to salute her. Though he passed no compliments upon her looks, he did not attempt to conceal his admiration.

“ What dost thou want with me, child ? ” inquired Rosworm, regarding her with a look of affection, not unmingled with pride—for the engineer was very proud of his lovely daughter.

“ There is a young man without, father, who desires to speak with you, when you are at leisure,” replied Gertrude.

“ Dost know him ? ” demanded Rosworm.

“ I neither know him, nor did he tell me

his business, father," she replied. "He is a stranger. But he looks a gentle youth."

"Hum!" exclaimed Rosworm. "I warrant me he hath a simpering smile like some of the lackbrains who haunt my door."

"He[?] does not resemble the young men of Manchester, father," replied Gertrude.

At this rejoinder the governor laughed heartily.

"Did he not give thee his name?"

"No, father," she replied. "He said he was merely a messenger."

"Bid him be seated. I will speak with him anon," rejoined Rosworm.

"He will not be displeased to wait if you will bear him company, fair damsel," laughed the governor, as Gertrude went forth.

Decidedly, the messenger was a very

handsome young man, and could not be a Roundhead, since his long brown locks fell upon his shoulders ; nor was it easy to determine his rank from his plain riding-dress, but it must be owned that he had the air of a Cavalier.

“Pray be seated, sir,” said Gertrude. “My father will see you presently. The governor of the town is with him.”

“I can wait his leisure,” replied the messenger.

And he then made a few remarks calculated to engage her in conversation ; his manner being so respectful that she could not fail to be pleased with him.

“You are from Germany, I conclude—nay, I am certain,” he said. “How do you like this town after the fine old cities of your own country?”

“Not much,” she replied. “And I

should be glad to go back to Nuremberg, where I was born, but I must remain here with my father."

"Then you will not care if the town is besieged?" remarked the young man.

"No, I am a soldier's daughter, and accustomed to fighting. I have been taught to fire a musket, and can hit the target as well as most marksmen. Besides, I am not altogether unskilled in the use of the sword."

"Being thus accomplished, 'tis a pity you cannot serve the king," observed the messenger.

"My father has entered into an engagement with the Parliament," she replied.

"But your own sympathies are with the Royalists?" he cried quickly. "I am sure of it."

"It is not prudent, or proper, to make

such observations in this house," she remarked with some significance.

"I will trust you," he said. "Nay, more, I think you will aid me. Listen, I pray you," he said, altering his tone. "I am sent to purchase your father's services at any price for the king. You will understand that I have full authority to make this offer when I tell you that I am one of Lord Derby's officers—Frank Standish."

"I counsel you not to make the offer to my father," said Gertrude. "He will regard it as an affront. His own feelings are in favour of the king, but he will never desert the Parliament."

"Cannot you induce him to do so, fair damsel?" besought Standish.

"I shall not make the attempt," she replied. "Take my advice and leave the town as quickly as you can. Colonel

Holland, the governor, is with my father, and should he discover who you are, he will infallibly cause your arrest. Ah ! here they come ! You are too late."

This exclamation was uttered as the door of the inner room opened, and Rosworm came forth with the governor.

"Is this the young man who desires to speak with me?" demanded Rosworm.

"It is, father," replied Gertrude, with some hesitation.

"Do you know who he is?" remarked Colonel Holland.

Rosworm shook his head.

"Then I will tell you," replied the governor. "It is one of the Earl of Derby's officers—Captain Standish. You cannot hold any communication with him."

"Certainly not," replied Rosworm. "You have come here on a bootless er-

rand, sir," he added to Standish. "I can receive no message from the Earl of Derby."

"Then I need trouble you no further," replied the other, preparing to depart.

"Stay !" exclaimed Colonel Holland. "Have you a safe-conduct ? "

"I have, sir," replied Standish, producing a paper.

"Let me look at it," said the governor.

The young man handed it to him.

After glancing at the passport, Colonel Holland returned it, and said in a stern tone:

"You are free to depart. But quit the town at once, or you will be treated as a spy."

"When I next appear, it will be to summon you in the king's name to surrender," said Standish.

And with a haughty bow to the governor he quitted the house.

“I think I ought to have ordered his arrest,” observed Colonel Holland.

“You did better to let him go,” rejoined Rosworm. “He will tell Lord Derby that we are prepared. Besides, he had a safe-conduct.”

“True,” said the governor.

Gertrude made no remark, but she was evidently well pleased that the young man had got off.

Meanwhile, Frank Standish pursued his way along a narrow street that skirted the churchyard, and led him to the top of Smithy Bank, whence he could distinguish the bridge across the Irwell, and noticed that it was strongly defended by posts and chains. He also remarked that a guard was stationed at the upper end of the bridge.

He did not stop to make any further observations ; perceiving that his movements were watched, and that he was an object of

suspicion to several of the townspeople whom he encountered.

As he proceeded towards Deansgate, he caught sight of the mud-walls with which Colonel Rosworm had surrounded the town. The ramparts were about ten or twelve feet high, and proportionately thick, and no doubt would completely shelter the musketeers stationed behind them.

At the bottom of Market-street-lane, there was an outlet to Acres Fields, and this was protected by posts and chains. In Deansgate a barricade was erected. Externally, the fortifications ran round this part of the town.

Frank Standish having already exhibited his safe-conduct from Sir Edward Mosley to the guard stationed at the barricade, was permitted to quit the town without any hindrance.

VIII.

ALPORT LODGE.

ON this side of Manchester, at the period in question, and at no great distance from the town, stood Alport Lodge, a mansion belonging to Sir Edward Mosley. Situated in the midst of a large park that extended nearly to Castlefield, and ran down to the left bank of the Irwell, the house was almost concealed by trees.

As Sir Edward Mosley was a staunch Royalist, the proximity of his mansion

to the town was by no means agreeable to the Roundheads, who often threatened to despoil the park, and knock the house about his ears ; but no attempt had been made to execute their threats, probably because Sir Edward kept a considerable number of armed retainers, and would undoubtedly have made a vigorous resistance.

The park gates were within a few hundred yards of the town, and were always kept shut and guarded. Frank Standish, however passed through them, and proceeded to the lodge.

Nothing indicated that the house was occupied by a troop of horse belonging to Sir Thomas Tyldesley, who had arrived there late on the previous night, and had taken up their quarters so quickly, that their presence was not suspected by the neighbouring Parliamentarians.

Every precaution was taken to prevent discovery. No troopers were seen in Alport park, and when Frank Standish visited the town, as just described, he was wholly unattended.

On reaching the mansion, Standish found Sir Edward Mosley and Sir Thomas Tyldesley in the entrance hall, and at once informed them that his errand had proved unsuccessful.

“Nothing is to be done with Rosworm,” he said. “He is incorruptible. I could not even obtain a word with him in private; but I had some converse with his daughter, and she quite satisfied me that her father will not listen to any proposition. Rosworm would have preferred the king to the Parliament in the first instance, but since he has engaged with the latter, he will remain firm.”

“I am sorry for it,” said Sir Thomas

Tyldesley. "He would have been of infinite use to us. But how looks the town? I suppose he has thoroughly fortified it?"

"So far as I could discern, I think he has put it into a good state of defence," replied Standish. "But I did not see any of the militia, and there were few armed men in the market-place and streets."

"All the entrances are guarded, are they not?" remarked Sir Edward Mosley. "The garrison cannot have relaxed in vigilance?"

"The watch did not seem to me very strictly kept," replied Standish. "But it is clear the governor has received no intelligence of Lord Derby's approach."

"His lordship would not leave Warrington with his company of horse and foot till this morning," said Sir Thomas Tyldesley; "but the march of nigh three thousand men cannot be kept concealed. The

news of their advance will reach Manchester before night."

"It will then be too late to make any further preparations for defence, or obtain assistance from the rebels in the neighbourhood," observed Standish.

"I fear not," said Sir Edward Mosley. "From all I have heard, a very considerable force can be quickly collected. Many of the neighbouring gentlemen, well affected to the Parliament, have promised aid, and are holding themselves in readiness for a summons—General Peter Egerton of Shaw, Colonel Duckenfield, Captain John Arderne of Harden, Captain Edward Butterworth of Belfield, Captain John Booth of Dunham, Captain Robert Hyde, Captain Robert Bradshaw, and several others."

"A goodly list, in sooth," said Sir Thomas Tyldesley. "Most of them are old friends of my own. 'Tis sad to think

that gentlemen of good family should turn rebels and traitors. Heaven grant that Lord Derby may arrive here before they can bring succour to the town !”

Here their discourse was interrupted by the arrival of a messenger from Lord Derby, who had reached Ashton-upon-Mersey, where he was detained at the ford in consequence of an accident to one of the carriages of his artillery.

The messenger brought word that his lordship had left Warrington at an early hour that morning, with the whole of his force—namely, two thousand foot and six hundred horse, of whom two hundred were dragoons. He had with him ten large pieces of ordnance.

The force had marched in two bodies, the larger division, commanded by the Earl of Derby, who had with him Sir Gilbert Hoghton, Sir Alexander Rad-

cliffe, Sir Gilbert Gerard, Mr. Charles Townley, Captain Windebank, Mr. Farrington of Worden, Mr. Tarbock of Tarbock, and several others, marched along the left bank of the Mersey to Ashton, where they were detained as already mentioned.

The other and lesser division, commanded by Sir John Girlington, high sheriff of Lancashire, who was accompanied by Lord Molineux, Mr. Byrom of Byrom, and other gentlemen of note, meant to take its way through Wolston and Rixton, between Chat Moss and the right bank of the Irwell, through Barton and Eccles, to Salford. The arrival of Lord Molineux with his division, added the messenger, might soon be looked for.

Scarcely had the message been delivered, when it was made evident that information of the approach of the Royalists had reached

the town—the bells from the church-tower and other buildings being rung loudly and continuously to summon aid.

Anxious to see what was doing, Sir Thomas Tyldesley ordered out a party of horse, and accompanied by Sir Robert Mosley and Captain Standish, both of whom had mounted their steeds, rode towards the town to reconnoitre.

They did not approach within musket-shot—their object not being to commence the attack. But when they descried any men on horseback sallying forth from the various outlets, they pursued them and drove them back.

Meanwhile, the bells continued their clamour, and ere long numbers of countrymen armed with bills, pikes, clubs, and other weapons, appeared, and began to flock towards the town.

Some of these could have been intercepted,

but as they were speedily followed by parties of well-armed horsemen, it was deemed expedient not to molest them.

After some time spent in these observations, Sir Thomas Tyldesley retired with his party. They did not, however, return to Alport Lodge, but proceeded in the direction of Stretford, with the intention of riding on to the ford over the Mersey at Ashton.

They had not got beyond Old Trafford, when they perceived a company of horsemen, and at once comprehending that the troop belonged to Lord Derby, hastened forward to meet them.

As they expected, this was the advanced guard of the earl's division, and was commanded by Sir Gilbert Hoghton, from whom they learnt that the whole force, together with the artillery, had safely crossed the ford.

In another minute, the main body came in sight, headed by the Earl of Derby, Sir Alexander Radcliffe, and others, and a meeting took place between them and their friends.

Save for the accident to the gun-carriage, nothing untoward had happened during Lord Derby's march from Warrington, and all his men, both horse and foot, were in good order.

It now became necessary to find quarters for them for the night; but this was easily managed, since there was no lack of barns and farm-houses near Hulme and Chorlton.

A strong guard, that remained under arms all night, was placed opposite Deansgate, and another strong guard stationed at the upper end of Market-street Lane.

As a matter of course, quarters were provided for the Earl of Derby and some of

the Royalist gentlemen with him, while others were lodged at Hulme Hall and Rusholme Place.

Wishing to confer with Lord Molineux and Sir John Girlington, Lord Derby had no sooner given all needful orders, than he set out for Salford, taking with him Captain Standish and half a dozen dragoons.

To reach Salford it was needful to cross the river Irwell by the ferry, situated about a quarter of a mile below Castle Field, and to this point the earl rode with his attendants, and quickly gained the opposite bank, for the ferry-boat had been previously secured, and was waiting for him.

Night had now come on, but Lord Derby was well acquainted with the road, and the lights glimmering in Salford served to guide him.

Salford was full of soldiers, every house

being occupied, and a good deal of drinking and merry-making going on.

Totally different from Manchester, from which town it was only separated by the river, Salford remained faithful to the king. Lord Molineux and Sir John Girlington had been warmly welcomed by the inhabitants, who heartily wished them success. The two leaders had taken up their quarters in a large house situated in the street leading to the bridge, and there Lord Derby found them.

The march from Warrington had been accomplished without difficulty, and without the loss of a single man. Already, Lord Molineux had posted three companies of musketeers in sheltered spots, and had raised a battery with three pieces of cannon near the foot of the bridge. Unluckily, the bridge was barricaded by Rosworm and

strongly fortified. Moreover, the banks on the Manchester side of the Irwell were steep and rocky, and considerably higher than those on the Salford side, while the walls of the churchyard on the left, at which a party of musketeers were stationed, completely commanded the bridge and its approaches, as well as the opposite houses.

In this advantageous position a small piece of artillery had been planted by the skilful German engineer.

Through the gloom could be dimly distinguished the noble Collegiate Church. On the summit of the lofty square tower that faced the river, a dozen musketeers were now stationed, while, if necessary, a beacon could be instantly lighted.

On the left of the churchyard, a dark mass of buildings indicated the position of the college, while, on the right of the

bridge, the precipitous banks were covered with ancient habitations.

Such was the sombre picture presented to the Earl of Derby as he stood with Lord Molineux and Sir John Girlington at the lower end of the old bridge.

He was still gazing at it, when a shot, fired from the walls of the churchyard, struck a building near them. The earl did not change his position, nor would he allow the shot to be returned.

After such an inspection as could be made under the circumstances, Lord Derby left Salford and proceeded with Sir Alexander Radcliffe to Ordsall Hall, where he remained for a short time discussing his plans for the morrow.

He then re-crossed the river by the ferry, and returned to Alport Lodge.

IX.

A VIEW OF OLD MANCHESTER FROM THE TOWER OF THE
COLLEGIATE CHURCH.

GREAT anxiety prevailed among the townspeople of Manchester, when they awoke next morning, and found themselves invested by the forces of the Earl of Derby.

Except on the north-west, the approaches to the town were cut off by the besiegers. A battery had been reared by the earl, on which five large pieces of ordnance were mounted, destined to rake the centre of Deansgate ; another small piece of artillery,

called a drake, was likewise placed opposite the mount in Acres Field.

Throughout the whole of the night Rosworm had been on the watch, and had frequently made the round of the fortifications to see that the sentinels were at their posts. Just as it began to get light, he ascended to the summit of the church tower, whence he could survey the whole scene, and note the exact position of the besiegers.

Placed in an elevated position in the very centre of the town, which it completely overlooked, as well as the adjacent country for miles round, the noble old church, now raised into a cathedral, could not fail to play an important part in the defence against the threatened attack of the Royalists.

The ancient fabric, as we have intimated, was surrounded by a large churchyard, extending on one side to the very edge

of the precipitous banks of the Irwell, from which it was defended by a low stone wall, that offered a most advantageous position for the musketeers, and combined with the lofty church-tower rising behind it to render an attack upon the bridge exceedingly perilous. Indeed, no part of the town was so strong as that adjacent to the church. Protected by high precipitous banks, by walls which could be turned into fortifications, and by buildings that could be occupied by musketeers, it really presented a very formidable aspect.

At the back of the church, and running along Hunt's Bank, which likewise faced the Irwell, were the high stone walls bounding a large court-yard belonging to the college. Beyond was the college itself, a large stone structure reared on the banks of the river Irk, near its confluence with the Irwell.

At this point there was a small bridge

over the Irk, now strongly barricaded, and having an outpost in advance, so as completely to defend the approach to the town on this side.

On the other side of the churchyard was an avenue, terminated by the Mill Gate, which was likewise strongly barricaded, but since this side of the town had not been invested, communication could be kept up with the neighbourhood.

Viewed from the summit of the lofty church-tower, which, as we have said, commanded the whole scene, the town and its environs presented a very curious picture.

The morning was bright and clear, so that every detail could be perfectly examined. Composed, as already mentioned, of black and white timber and plaster habitations, the town was almost quadrangular in form, being strongest on the north-west, where it was bounded by the Irwell and the

Irk, the banks of both rivers being steep and rocky, especially near the church.

On the north-east were Shude Hill and Mill Lane, then little more than fields, partially enclosed, and on the south-east was an avenue conducting to the market-place. This, with Deansgate on the south, formed the principal approach to the town. Except on the side protected by the high banks of the Irwell and the Irk, as above mentioned, the whole of the town was surrounded by mud walls and bulwarks raised by the indefatigable Rosworm.

Commencing on the left bank of the Irwell on the south-west, these fortifications passed Deansgate, at the further extremity of which there was a barricade, enclosed the whole of Acres Field, and Pool Fold, where Radcliffe Hall was situated, passed on to the upper end of Market-street Lane, and skirting the fields between that

thoroughfare and Shude Hill, terminated at the bottom of Mill Lane, where, as already mentioned, there was a strong barricade.

In Acres Field and at no great distance from Radcliffe Hall—a picturesque old mansion, occupied by Captain Richard Radcliffe—a mount had been reared, whereon two small pieces of cannon were planted. Here, also, was a large building in which the troops composing the garrison were quartered, and where the magazine was kept. Various outbuildings were used as stables by the cavalry.

Very striking was the appearance of the town, as beheld on that morning from the summit of the church tower.

Outside the walls on the south, near Alport Lodge, above which floated the royal banner, a battery had been reared by the Earl of Derby, the large guns

of which commanded the centre of Deansgate. Behind this battery several companies of infantry were drawn up ; while a formidable display of well-equipped cavalry was likewise made.

But the spectators of this scene were chiefly interested by a party of horsemen who were slowly making the circuit of the fortifications.

At the head of the troop was the Earl of Derby, easily to be distinguished by his war-horse and accoutrements. He was attended by Sir Thomas Tyldesley, Sir Edward Mosley, Sir Alexander Radcliffe, Sir Gilbert Gerard, Mr. Farrington of Worden, Mr. Roger Nowell of Read, Mr. Windebank, Mr. Prestwich of Hulme, and several other gentlemen of distinction, who made a goodly show. Each had an officer with him. Captain Standish acted as Lord Derby's aide-de-camp.

Though the party rode slowly on, not a shot was fired from the walls, orders having been given by the governor of the town to await the attack of the enemy. Various small parties of horsemen were galloping round the fortifications.

The spectacle presented by the besieging force stationed in Salford was not so striking as that offered by the troops in Alport Park, but the preparations for attack were equally formidable.

A battery of five large pieces of ordnance had been reared at the foot of the bridge. Several troops of musketeers were stationed in the gardens on the banks of the river. Others could likewise be seen at the open windows of the houses, and a few had climbed the roofs, and ensconced themselves behind the tall stacks of chimneys.

After carefully noting all the preparations of the besiegers both in Alport Park and

Salford, and giving some instructions to the musketeers, Rosworm descended from the church-tower.

As he issued into the churchyard, he perceived a large body of men, completely armed, who must have entered the town during the night, since he had not seen them before.

On inquiry, he learnt they were tenants of Mr. Ralph Assheton of Middleton, and commanded by Captain Robert Bradshaw from Bolton.

Shortly afterwards Colonel Holland made his appearance with Colonel Egerton, Colonel Robert Duckenfield, Captain John Booth, Captain Birch, and Sergeant-Major Radcliffe of Radcliffe Hall, who had the command of the town forces.

A war council was then held on the spot by these leaders, assisted by Rosworm, at which it was decided that

Captain Bradshaw, with his company of a hundred and fifty men, should take up a position in Deansgate against the battery raised by the Earl of Derby near Alport Lodge ; that Market-street Lane should be guarded by Major Radcliffe, the Mill Gate by Captain Booth, and Shude Hill by Captain Birch. The defence of the bridge was entrusted to Colonel Rosworm, who undertook to prevent the enemy from crossing it.

These arrangements concluded, Captain Bradshaw marched off to take up his perilous position in Deansgate, and Major Radcliffe proceeded to Radcliffe Hall to collect his men, but Captain Booth and Captain Birch were still conferring with Colonel Holland and Rosworm, when two divines, as their clerical garb proclaimed them, entered the churchyard.

X.

WARDEN HEYRICK AND MR. BOURNE.

ONE of these was the Reverend Richard Heyrick, warden of the Collegiate Church.

His deportment and features indicated a proud and overbearing character. He had become extremely popular among the Puritanical faction in the town by his determined enmity to the Papists, and his opposition to all the movements of the Royalists.

Warden Heyrick was a man of great

eloquence, and unsparing in his denunciations of Papacy, as an extract from one of his intolerant exhortations will suffice to show. "Whence is it, men and brethren," he exclaimed, "that Popery so far prevails at this day—that Popery so much increases among us? I beseech you that are armed with authority go to the utmost of your authority! You that have power to punish, punish! to indict, indict! to present, present! Let not Papists rest in peace, in security by you! If the chiefest and greatest men of a parish be Papists, their children, their servants, their tenants, their poor neighbours, their rich kindred and friends, are all in danger by them. My lord will have his followers as well of his vices as of his person. If he leave his friend at the church door, he turns not back without his attendants. If his honour please to be idolatrous, they will wait on

him to mass. You that keep back the sword from doing justice when Heaven calls for it, you may yourselves die by the sword, and the blood of all that perish by your neglect shall lie upon your heads. *Crudelitas pro Christo pietas est.* Cruelty for Christ is godliness."

Again, in a sermon delivered in the Collegiate Church just before the outbreak of the Civil War, he said: "War is only sweet to them that are ignorant of it. Our kingdom hath enjoyed a longer time of peace than some kingdoms have. Our age hath not been roused with the barking of uncouth wolves; the midnight drum hath not frightened our sleep; the sounding trumpet has not deafened our ears; our beacons have not been fired, our ships arrested, or our walls manned; our towns have not been ransacked, our houses ruined; we

have not sowed and the stranger reaped ; we have not built, and the enemy possessed ; we have not been confounded with strange languages ; but peace hath been within our walls, and plenteousness within our dwellings ;—Peace, the daughter of the Gospel of Peace—Plenty, the daughter of Peace—Peace, the glory of Heaven, the joy of the whole world.”

That Warden Heyrick had become friendly to Puritanism, as is made manifest in a passage of one of his sermons which runs thus :—“ Of late, I have heard them much branded with the name of Puritan that would not yield up their souls and consciences to the chair of bishops, with their estates, liberties, and lives to the will of their superiors. The name is very large and very reproachful. A bishop affirmed he could as well fetch one from the guilt of

felony as from the imputation of Puritanism. My humble notion is, make us all Puritans, or leave no Puritan among us !”

That the warden foresaw the consequences of his infuriated discourses we do not believe, but they did infinite mischief.

Warden Heyrick was a very striking-looking personage—tall, erect, and dignified in deportment, but easily excited, when his gestures were scarcely under his command, and his eyes seemed to flash fire. At one time the Earl of Derby had entertained a very high opinion of him, but he looked upon him latterly as a mischievous bigot.

With the warden was Mr. Bourne, a fellow of the Collegiate Church, but quite as puritanical in his opinions as Heyrick himself. He had become a professed Presbyterian, and has been styled from his efforts to reform the church, the John Knox of Manchester. Mr. Bourne was aged and

infirm, and for some weeks had been confined to his bed, but he roused himself to encourage the townspeople to resist the Popish beseigers, as he designated the force under Lord Derby.

A miracle seemed to have been wrought in his favour. Up to that morning, he appeared almost incapable of exertion, but his strength suddenly returned, and he now walked about almost without assistance. However, he was accompanied by the two chaplains, Mr. Hollingworth, and Mr. Walker, who were likewise professed Presbyterians. By the Puritans Mr. Bourne was regarded with the highest respect, and they declared he had long been a blessing to the town. His countenance bore traces of the severe illness he had endured, but his hoary locks and beard gave him a very venerable appearance.

While the warden and Mr. Bourne were

conversing with Colonel Holland and Colonel Egerton, voices were heard singing a psalm, and presently a large body of men, belonging to the town guard, entered the churchyard. Some of them were provided with muskets, and others armed with bills and clubs. Their sober apparel, grave looks, and short lank hair proclaimed them Roundheads.

Their captain was a stalwart personage with a very moody countenance. Over a stout buff coat he wore a steel breast-plate, and his closely cropped locks were covered by a steel head-piece. He had pistols in his belt and a long sword by his side. The name of this individual, who had been a butcher, was Joshua Cranage. He was an Anabaptist, and was accompanied by the Reverend Shimrath Stonehouse, a minister of that sect, who was very warlike in his sentiments. They

entered the churchyard, singing, *Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder*, and when the psalm was ended, and a halt made, the Reverend Shimrath addressed a few words to the men, and said :

“Fear not, but fight valiantly. The Lord is on our side, and will lend us aid against our enemies. They have compassed us about, but in the Lord’s name will we destroy them.”

On seeing Colonel Holland, Rosworm, and the warden, Captain Cranage marched up to them, attended by the Anabaptist minister, and was very well received.

As a morning service was about to take place in the church, the warden invited them to attend it, and no objection being made by the Anabaptist minister, the whole party repaired to the sacred fabric followed by the town guard.

Already, as it turned out, a great number

of persons were assembled in the church, and to this large congregation Warden Heyrick addressed a fiery discourse.

Rosworm, whose duties called him to the bridge, did not attend the service, but when he had satisfied himself that all his men were at their posts, and that no immediate danger of attack was to be apprehended, he returned.

By this time, the service was over, and Captain Cranage and his men had marched on to the Cross, where they waited for orders. Thither Rosworm followed with the governor and Colonel Egerton, and they had scarcely reached the market-place, when they learnt that a messenger had been sent by the Earl of Derby, but was detained by Captain Bradshaw till Colonel Holland's pleasure was known.

Thereupon the governor mounted his horse, and rode to the barricade at Deans-

gate, where he found the messenger, who proved to be Captain Standish.

Courteously saluting him, Colonel Holland bade him deliver his message, and he would answer it at once.

“I am sent by the Earl of Derby,” replied Standish, “to demand an immediate entrance to the town in order that he may take possession of it, and all the stores within it, in the king’s name. What answer shall I deliver to his lordship?”

“Say to the Earl of Derby,” replied the other, “that I, Colonel Richard Holland, Governor of Manchester, hold the town for the Parliament, and peremptorily refuse his lordship entrance—neither will I deliver it up to him on his insolent demand.”

“Is this answer final?” said Standish. “or has your excellency any further terms to propose? If so, I am willing to submit

them to the Earl of Derby, who, I may state, is very desirous to prevent effusion of blood. If the town is quietly surrendered, his lordship will treat the inhabitants kindly, but in the event of an obstinate and useless resistance, fearful destruction will ensue."

"I laugh at these idle threats," rejoined the governor, contemptuously. "When Lord Derby learns that we are fully prepared to withstand an attack, and are certain to receive large reinforcements, he may deem it prudent to withdraw from before the town."

"Think it not," said Standish. "One more question, and I have done. Does your excellency require any delay?"

"None," replied the governor, in a tone calculated to put an end to the interview.

Standish was then conducted to the barriers at the end of Deansgate by Cap-

tain Bradshaw; and passing out with the trooper who had attended him, rode back to Alport Lodge, where he found the Earl of Derby with Sir Alexander Radcliffe and Sir Thomas Tyldesley.

“The governor refuses to surrender the town, my lord, and does not require any time for negotiation,” he cried, as he sprang from the saddle, and advanced to the earl.

“’Tis as I expected,” said Lord Derby. “But my conscience is now easy. Let the trumpets at once sound to the assault.”

XI.

THE ASSAULT.

IN obedience to the earl's commands, the trumpets were then blown, and the battery facing Deansgate immediately opened fire.

The cannonade was continued for some time; but no material damage was done, nor were the defenders driven from their position.

An attempt was next made by Sir Thomas Tyldesley with a party of horse to force the barricade, but it proved unsuc-

cessful. Captain Bradshaw reserved his fire till the assailants were within a short distance of the barrier. He then poured a sharp volley upon them, by which several men were wounded and unhorsed, and the rest turned back.

Another attack was made by Sir Gilbert Hoghton against the barrier at the end of Market-street Lane, and was successfully resisted by Captain Radcliffe. Several fruitless attempts were likewise made to scale the ramparts, but in every instance the assailants were repulsed.

Simultaneously with these attacks on the barriers and walls, a very vigorous and determined effort was made by Lord Molineux and Sir John Girlington to force the defences of the bridge; but Colonel Rosworm with his musketeers kept up such a constant fire upon them from the walls of the churchyard, that they could not

advance. The small piece of ordnance planted by Rosworm on Smithy Bank did considerable execution. Moreover, the marksmen posted on the church-tower rendered good service.

Thus far fortune had favoured the besieged, who were in high spirits at their success, and many of the religious enthusiasts firmly believed that Heaven fought on their side. This notion was encouraged by their ministers. The Reverend Shimrath Stonehouse called out with a loud voice :

“Go on courageously. Through the name of the Lord, we shall destroy them. They fall down flat, but we do rise and stand up steadfastly through the Lord.”

The appearance of the besieged town was very singular and totally different from its ordinary aspect. Very little business was done, most of the shops being closed as on the Sabbath, but all the taverns were open

and full of customers, and a good deal of ale and wine was consumed. All classes were full of warlike excitement, and breathed vengeance against the malignants and Papists, whom they coupled together.

Most of the Puritans and Roundheads, who could everywhere be distinguished by their cropped hair, tall hats, and sober habiliments, were armed in one way or other—some with muskets and pistols—some with swords, and others with pikes. But it was evident they were all earnest in the cause—all ready and eager to fight. Crowds assembled in the market-place, where psalms were sung, or gathered round the Cross to listen to the Reverend Shimrath Stonehouse.

A multitude of strangers were now in the town. Several gentlemen, residing in the neighbourhood, staunch adherents of the Parliament, had come to the assistance

of the place, and brought with them their armed retainers. These with the militia, which mustered some four or five hundred, amounted in all to nearly two thousand men.

The country people were animated by the same strong religious feeling as the townsfolk, and had the same hatred of the malignants and Papists. It was this religious feeling that made Manchester so strong, because it bound together all classes of the community.

A few of the inhabitants continued loyal and well disposed towards the king, but being in so great a minority, they did not dare to show themselves. Hoping and praying the Earl of Derby might be successful and subdue the town, they meant to rise to his assistance, as soon as they could do so with safety.

To those who really believe themselves under the protection of Heaven nothing

can cause alarm; and even when cannon shot was falling in the streets, or demolishing houses, no misgiving was felt by the inhabitants.

As to the soldiers, the preachers were with them everywhere — on the walls — at the gates—exposing themselves to the fire of the enemy—solacing the wounded—cheering on their friends.

Nor was this zeal confined to sectarian ministers, for Warden Heyrick, Mr. Bourne, and their chaplains were equally zealous.

Above all, the greatest reliance was placed on Rosworm, who was looked upon as the chief defender of the town, and since he escaped all injury, it was thought he was under the special protection of Heaven.

Throughout the siege, the inhabitants continued their religious meetings, their public preachings in the market-place, at the Cross, and elsewhere—their constant

psalm-singing. Every one lent aid, fearing to be treated as a malignant if he stayed at home. Gentlemen employed themselves in casting bullets, and preparing matches for firelocks. Gentlewomen rendered all the assistance in their power, and brought meat and drink for the soldiers.

When Sir Thomas Tyldesley and his dragoons were driven back from Deansgate by Captain Bradshaw—when Sir Gilbert Hoghton was repulsed by Captain Radcliffe—there was great rejoicing among the saints, and their confidence, shaken for the moment, was fully restored.

When Lord Molineux and Sir John Girlington were determined to pass the bridge, and were driven back by the marksmen on the walls of the churchyard, there was again great rejoicing among the saints, and Rosworm was hailed as their deliverer. Shouts of triumph everywhere resounded

throughout the town, and hymns were sung, but Rosworm was not to be deceived. He felt that some successes had been gained, but he knew that far more must be done, ere the town could be effectually delivered from its powerful foe.

Once more he ascended the church-tower to see how matters stood.

On looking towards Alport Lodge, he could easily perceive that preparations for a general assault were being actively made. For the moment the artillerymen at the battery had ceased firing, but it was evident they would recommence very shortly.

In Salford it was the same thing. There the beseigers were preparing for a fresh attack. Having obtained possession of a couple of houses at the foot of the bridge that afforded them shelter, they could cover the advance of the assailing party.

At length the designs of the Earl of Derby

became manifest. Determined not to be baffled, he sent off a party of men under the command of Captain Windebank to set fire to two large barns standing at no great distance from the walls.

At the same time another party was despatched to set fire to eight or ten houses at the end of Deansgate. This was done in spite of the efforts of the besieged to prevent it, and the houses soon burst into flames. As the wind was blowing at the time from the south-west, the flames and smoke were driven upon Bradshaw and his men, and almost blinded them. Moreover, it was feared that the conflagration would extend to the town, and such would undoubtedly have been the case, had not the wind suddenly changed—a circumstance not unnaturally regarded as a special providence.

While the fire was raging, a large party

of Royalists, under the command of Sir Gilbert Gerard, made another attempt to enter the town, but were baffled by the bravery of Captain Bradshaw and his men, supported by a band of musketeers sent to their assistance by Rosworm. After a sharp encounter the Royalists were driven back with considerable loss.

No further attack was made at the time on the barrier and walls, but the besiegers having possessed themselves of a house at the foot of the bridge, as previously stated, kept up a constant fire throughout the night.

XII.

CAPTAIN CRANAGE.

IN the conflict at the barrier in Deansgate, Frank Standish, who accompanied Sir Gilbert Gerard, had his horse shot under him, and while on the ground received a thrust from a pike in the arm, that prevented him from using his sword, and he was therefore obliged to surrender.

Taken to the college, where his wound was dressed, he was still in the surgeon's hands, when Rosworm came into the room

with some other prisoners, and recognising him, asked if he was badly hurt.

“Not much,” replied the young man.

“You look very faint,” said the engineer. “My house is close by; go there and get a cup of wine. My daughter will attend to you. I shall return shortly. I will be answerable for him,” he added to the guard.

This was enough. As soon as the surgeon had finished his task, Standish was allowed to depart, and at once repaired to Rosworm’s dwelling.

He found Gertrude in the houseplace, examining a musket, which she had been cleaning. She seemed greatly surprised to see him.

He told her he was a prisoner and wounded, and added that her father had sent him to the house to be cared for.

“In that case you are welcome,” she said. “Sit down, I pray you.”

He gladly complied, and opening a cupboard, she filled a drinking-cup with wine and set it before him.

“You have been unlucky,” she remarked, as he emptied the cup. “Your lord has not found it so easy to take the town as he expected.”

“No,” he replied. “The inhabitants may thank your father for the defence they have been able to make. Had he not been here to aid the rebels, Lord Derby would now be master of the town. But I see you have just laid down a musket. Have you used it?”

“Not yet,” she replied. “My father will not allow me to go forth, or I should have done.”

“He is quite right,” said Standish. “You are better at home.”

“I do not think so,” she rejoined. “I cannot hear the thunder of the cannon or the rattle of musketry without longing to mix in the fray. Where were you wounded?”

“In an attack on the Deansgate barrier,” he replied. “My horse was shot under me, and I received a thrust from a pike ere I could rise. For a moment I thought all was over with me.”

“Would I had been there to help you!” she exclaimed.

“I wish you had,” he rejoined. “I met with bad usage. Although I had surrendered, the leader of the town-guard, Captain Cranage, would have cut me down, if Captain Bradshaw had not prevented him.”

“That was a base act,” she cried. “I do not like these Roundheads, but their cause is just.”

“Do not mistake,” cried Standish. “Their cause is not just. They are rebels, and have thrown the whole kingdom into confusion. It grieves me to think that your father has joined with them. Ah! there the psalm-singing knaves are at work again,” he added, as voices were heard outside singing a hymn.

As the hymn ceased, the door opened, and the stalwart figure of Captain Cranage was seen.

“That is the man who would have slain me when I had surrendered,” remarked Standish.

“What do I behold?” cried Cranage. “Has a Papist and a malignant taken refuge here. My men shall drag him forth, and put him to death.”

“I will resist!” cried Standish, springing to his feet.

Then recollecting that he was disabled,

and without a sword, he looked confounded.

“He must not be molested,” interposed Gertrude. “My father has sent him.”

“This is the second time since I have surrendered that you have threatened to take my life,” said Standish. “I am a prisoner on parole.”

“Thou hast richly deserved death,” said Cranage; “and had I been in command at the Deansgate barrier, thou shouldst have died. Thou wert present when the houses were set on fire.”

“What of that?” cried Gertrude. “The men had received their orders from Lord Derby. Did you think this officer would prevent them?”

“I know not,” said Cranage. “But since you plead for him, fair damsel, I will spare him.”

“I would not owe my life to thee,” said Standish, contemptuously.

“If you take him hence, you will greatly offend my father,” remarked Gertrude.

“Then I will abide his coming,” said Cranage, seating himself. “Give me a cup of wine, I pray you, fair damsel. I have had much hard work, and would fain recruit my forces.”

Gertrude again repaired to the cupboard, and set a flask before him.

“I drink to your health, fair damsel,” he said, eyeing her tenderly as he filled his glass. “You are aware that we have gained a complete victory over the malignants. We have beaten them off in every attack, and their cannon have not done us any hurt.”

“It is not well to exult,” said Gertrude. “The fight is not over yet.”

"The Lord is with us, therefore we cannot fail," said Cranage. "Ere many days, the town will be delivered from the enemy."

"Should it be so, it will have been preserved by Colonel Rosworm alone," said Standish. "To him the entire credit of the defence is due."

"Humph!" exclaimed Cranage. "Methinks we have done our part."

And he was proceeding with some further self-laudation, when Rosworm himself came in, accompanied by Colonel Holland.

"Standish bowed to the governor, who courteously returned the salutation.

"I have some intelligence that will be satisfactory to you, Captain Standish," he said. "The Earl of Derby has just sent an officer to propose an exchange of prisoners. I have agreed to the proposition. You

will, therefore, be exchanged for Captain Booth, who was captured in a sally that he made yesterday."

"I rejoice to hear it, colonel," replied Standish. "I have been very well treated since I have fallen into your hands—still I shall be glad to get back."

"You will be able to inform Lord Derby as to our condition," said the governor.

"I shall give his lordship a correct report, rest assured, colonel," replied Standish.

"That is all I desire," said the governor. "Captain Cranage," he continued, turning to that personage, who had risen on his entrance, "I notice that you have a small party of men outside."

"I have, colonel," replied the other. "Have you any orders?"

"Conduct Captain Standish to the Deansgate barrier, where he will be exchanged

for Captain Booth. At the same time, his sword must be restored to him."

"It shall be done, colonel," replied Cranage. "Come with me, sir," he added to Standish.

"Adieu, captain," said Rosworm. "You have not had a long captivity to endure."

"Nor has it been disagreeable," replied Standish, glancing at Gertrude. "I am much beholden both to you and your daughter."

Formally saluting the governor, and bowing to Rosworm and Gertrude, he went forth with Cranage, who did not like the task imposed upon him, but could not decline it.

Many a scowling look was fixed upon Standish as he passed through the streets with his guard, and many a deep malediction reached his ear.

As usual, crowds were collected in the market-place, singing hymns, or listening to preachers. The triumphant looks of these persons showed they were exulting in their success.

As the firing from the enemy's battery had ceased, Deansgate was full of soldiers, but they readily made way for Cranage and his party. On arriving at the barrier, they found Captain Bradshaw, with a guard drawn up beside him. In the midst of the guard were half a dozen Royalists—officers and men.

On the further side of the barrier was Captain Windebank, on horseback, attended by a small party of dragoons. He had brought Captain Booth and Captain Hyde, with five Parliamentary soldiers to be exchanged.

All the prisoners on either side being

now assembled, the exchange was promptly effected.

The Republican officers and men were welcomed with shouts, while the Royalists, attended by the escort, marched on to the battery, where they were greeted in like manner by the artillerymen. Here Standish received Captain Windebank's hearty congratulations on his release.

XIII.

ROSWORM PROPOSES TO BURN ALPORT LODGE.

AFTER Standish had been taken away, Colonel Holland and Rosworm continued for a short time in consultation.

Since they did not retire to the inner room, but remained in the houseplace, Gertrude, who was occupied in some household matters, necessarily overheard their discourse.

“I fear our ammunition may run short,” said the governor. “We have not more

powder than will suffice for to-morrow, and the match is nearly exhausted."

"We must obtain a fresh supply of both from the enemy," replied Rosworm. "That must be the main object of the sally to be made to-night. We may not be able to carry off any of the cannon from the battery, but we can secure some powder and match."

"That will be a great help to us," said the governor. "The supplies we expected from Ancoats Hall have been cut off."

"Hitherto we have done well," said Rosworm. "But, to-morrow, our good fortune may desert us."

"I trust not," said Colonel Holland. "But wherefore these misgivings?"

"I have no misgivings," replied Rosworm. "I am confident as ever. But I feel certain the Earl of Derby meditates a grand attack, and most probably will put

his plan in execution to-morrow—if he be not prevented.”

“How can we prevent him?” asked Colonel Holland.

“By striking a heavy blow to-night,” replied Rosworm. “He has tried to burn down the town. We must retaliate.”

“You do not propose to set fire to Salford?” cried the governor. “Such a step would be highly prejudicial to our cause. We have many partisans in the place.”

“No, I do not design to fire Salford,” said Rosworm. “I propose to attack the earl in his head-quarters, and burn down Alport Lodge.”

“That would be a heavy blow, indeed,” rejoined the governor. “But a courageous man is needed to strike it.”

“Captain Bradshaw is the man,” said Rosworm. “I would execute the project myself, but I cannot quit my post. This is

my plan : A sortie must take place at midnight. The night will be dark, so that it will favour the design. Bradshaw must sally forth with a party of fifty men, and make his way, as best he can, to the lodge. He may not succeed in passing the sentinels unobserved, but he must try to do so. Should he reach the house, he must throw combustibles into it and into the out-buildings. This done, he must hurry back to attack the battery and seize upon the ammunition."

"But he may want aid in this bold attempt," observed the governor.

"True," replied Rosworm. "Captain Radcliffe and Captain Booth must hold themselves in readiness; and as soon as they perceive that Alport Lodge is on fire, must sally forth—each with a party of fifty men—and make for the battery, to render aid in case of need."

“The plan is excellent, and cannot fail,” said Colonel Holland. “I will go at once, and give the necessary orders to Bradshaw and the others.”

“Impress upon them the necessity of caution,” observed Rosworm, “If the plan is betrayed it is ruined.”

“No imprudence need be feared on their part,” said Colonel Holland. “I may have to consult with you again. Shall I find you here?”

“You will find me in the churchyard, with the marksmen,” replied Rosworm.

The governor then departed on his errand.

“Give me a cup of wine, child,” said Rosworm to his daughter.

“Father,” said Gertrude, as she brought him the wine. “I should like to witness this nocturnal sortie.”

“Thou may’st see it from the church-

tower," he replied. "But there will be nothing visible till the hall is fired."

"I mean I should like to go with Captain Bradshaw's party," she remarked.

"Nonsense," he cried. "They will run great risk."

"I do not care for the risk," she rejoined. "Let me accompany them."

"Thou art mad to make such a foolish request."

"Nay, I am quite serious, father!"

"Then I should be more mad to grant it," he rejoined.

"I will put on male attire," she said. "I have a doublet that would fit me, and you yourself have taught me how to fire a pistol, and use a sword."

"But I never meant thee to join in a midnight sortie," he cried sharply. "Dismiss the notion at once."

"I have made up my mind to go,

father," she rejoined. "And you know I am very self-willed."

"Bah!" thou art only jesting. If I thought you were in earnest, I would lock you in your chamber."

"That wouldn't prevent me from going," she exclaimed, with a laugh. "I could easily get out of the window."

"Enough of this," he cried, rising from his seat. "I know you too well to believe you capable of such folly. Do as you will, I shall not control you."

"Then you give your consent?"

"Assuredly not," he rejoined. "If you are really curious to witness the sortie, you can accompany me when I make my rounds. But I ought to mention that a great thanksgiving meeting will be held at the church to-night. Thou hadst best attend it."

"I will—but I must not lose the sortie."

“Well! well! thou art wilful, and must be humoured. Go to the Trafford Chapel—on the south side of the nave—thou know’st it—I will come to thee there.”

“At what hour does the service commence?”

“Not till late—but it will be over long before midnight,” he rejoined.

“That is all I wanted to know,” she returned. “You will find me in the Trafford Chapel.”

Her father looked as if he had something more to say by way of caution, but he left it unsaid, and kissing her on the brow, took up his musket, and went forth.

No sooner was he gone than Gertrude went to the door of the kitchen, which was situated at the back of the house, and called out :

“Justine—come here—I want to speak to you.”

The summons was immediately answered by an elderly and decently attired woman, who acted as Rosworm's housekeeper.

"What think you, Justine?" cried Gertrude, clapping her hands with delight. "At length, I have my wish. My father has promised to take me with him to see the sortie to-night."

"But not to let you join it," remarked Justine.

"No, but I may do so, for all that," said Gertrude, with a singular look.

"I hope not," observed the housekeeper, in a severe tone. "You quite astound me! A young damsel join a midnight sortie—I never heard of such a thing. Why, you are certain to be killed."

"Not till I have killed half a dozen of the enemy, Justine."

"Then, indeed, you would deserve to be

shot. But I know your good father won't allow you to expose yourself to any such risk."

"We shall see, Justine. I mean to put on my military dress."

"That dress has put this whim in your head," observed Justine. "I thought mischief would come of it, when your father gave it you. But he meant it to serve for a different purpose."

"He meant me to wear it, or he would never have given it me, Justine—and so I will—this very night."

"Then Heaven protect you!" exclaimed the housekeeper, with a groan. "I see it is vain to reason with you."

And she returned to the kitchen.

For a few minutes Gertrude looked irresolute.

She then went up-stairs to her own

room, and opened a chest that contained some martial equipments—buff jerkin, baldrick, boots, and head-piece—all of light make, and small size. She knew they would fit her, for she had often tried them on.

The sight of these accoutrements decided her.

XIV.

THE NOCTURNAL THANKSGIVING.

THAT night the interior of the fine old Collegiate Church presented a most singular spectacle.

The broad nave and aisles were filled with armed men, for all who came thither to offer thanksgiving had brought their weapons with them—muskets, pikes, and halberts.

The place was imperfectly lighted, but the gloom heightened the effect of the scene. A lamp fixed here and there against the pillars partially illumined the

aisles, and revealed the stern visages of those grouped around.

The majority of the congregation were Presbyterians, but there were a great number of Roundheads present, easily distinguishable by their habiliments, and sour looks. These belonged to various sects, but they had come together on that night, which had been appointed for a general thanksgiving. Differences there might be among them on certain religious points, but they were all united against the common enemy—they were all violently opposed to the malignants and Papists. Among the assemblage thronging the nave were a large number of the militia, and several of their officers were with them. All the town guards—except those on duty—were present—Captain Cranage being conspicuous among them.

Every portion of the sacred structure was invaded—the chapels were full, the choir was as crowded as the nave, and the stalls were occupied by the fiercest enemies of the Established Church, who would gladly have destroyed them.

The service commenced with the psalm—*O Lord arise, and scatter thine enemies*—and from the many earnest voices that joined in it, a fine effect was produced, but the sacred song lost much of its solemnity, since no organ accompanied it.

The noble instrument which, until lately, had resounded in the church, its strains rolling along the roof, and filling every part of the pile, had been silenced by the rigorous Puritans.

Amid the deep silence that followed the cessation of the singing, the impressive accents of Mr. Bourne were heard reading

prayers, and the venerable figure of the divine could be seen in the pulpit.

Mr. Bourne was listened to with the greatest attention, and when he had finished reading, another hymn was sung by the whole congregation.

Then followed a fiery sermon by Warden Heyrick, that excited his hearers to the highest point, as was shown by the agitation pervading them.

The warden had just ceased, when Rosworm entered the sacred edifice from the south porch, and made his way as quickly as he could along the crowded aisle to the Trafford Chapel.

Here, among a number of armed men, he perceived a youthful soldier, accoutred in a buff coat and steel head-piece, and holding a musket in his hand. The features of this youth, so far as they could be discerned, were almost feminine, and his figure looked

too slight for the martial task he had undertaken. Still, he seemed full of spirit.

On receiving a sign from Rosworm he left the corner where he was standing, and joined him, and they quitted the church together.

There was no moon, but the night was clear, and the stars shining brightly. Rosworm led his young companion across the churchyard towards the low stone wall that overlooked the river. Here were the best marksmen, and occasionally a shot was fired. On looking from the wall the dark outline of the bridge could be discerned, and the river glimmered as they approached it.

The besiegers, as already mentioned, had now taken possession of a house at the foot of the bridge, and kept up a constant fire against the guard at the barrier, but without doing much damage.

Satisfied with this inspection, Rosworm retraced his steps. The service was not yet over in the church, and the lights gleaming from the painted windows of the massive pile produced a very striking effect.

“Thou hadst best go home,” said Rosworm, to his daughter. “I am about to mount the tower. Thou wilt find the ascent fatiguing.”

But Gertrude would not be dissuaded, and entering by a low door at which a sentinel was stationed, they began to mount a circular stone staircase, that brought them to the belfry. A small lamp here and there fixed against the walls showed them the way.

The scene in the belfry was exceedingly curious, the place being filled with musketeers, several of whom were seated on benches, and making a hearty supper of cold meat and bread. The room was

lighted up by a couple of lamps. Telling the men not to disturb themselves, Rosworm mounted with his daughter to the summit of the tower. Only a couple of musketeers were on the watch, but the others could be instantly summoned, if required.

From this elevated position, of course, the bridge could be discerned through the gloom, and the firing of the besiegers distinctly seen and heard. Looking towards the town, the buildings and fortifications could be imperfectly distinguished, but nothing was visible beyond the walls.

After contemplating this curious prospect for a few minutes, and pointing out the different barriers to his daughter, Rosworm bade the musketeers keep strict watch, and telling them he should return as soon as he had made his rounds, he descended with

Gertrude to the belfry, and thence to the churchyard.

The congregation were then issuing from the church, but Rosworm hurried on with Gertrude through the dark and silent streets, through the now deserted market-place, and halted not till they reached the walls. Everywhere the sentinels were at their posts.

Turning off on the right, Rosworm next bent his course towards Deansgate, but halted before he got to the barrier. The post he had chosen commanded the end of the street, and looked towards Alport Lodge. All was buried in obscurity in that direction, and the mansion was quite undistinguishable.

“You will be able to witness the sortie from this point,” said Rosworm. “I must leave you for a short time, but you will be

perfectly safe here. Do not quit the spot on any account."

And committing her to the care of a sentinel, he moved off.

XV.

THE SORTIE.

QUARTER of an hour elapsed, and Gertrude began to feel uneasy, but the sentinel reassured her, and shortly afterwards, while looking towards the park, she discerned a number of armed men issue from the gate, and move stealthily and silently towards Alport Lodge.

Feeling certain this must be Captain Bradshaw and his party, she would fain have joined them, but the sentinel would not let her stir.

The party quickly disappeared in the gloom, and for a few minutes all continued quiet.

A loud discharge of musketry then broke the stillness. At the same time, a bright light showed that the party had succeeded in setting Alport Lodge on fire. Whatever efforts were made to extinguish the conflagration proved unsuccessful. Built almost entirely of timber, the old hall burnt with the greatest rapidity. By this light the Royalist soldiers and their leaders could be seen actively, but unavailingly employed in trying to save the mansion from the entire destruction that threatened it.

Meanwhile, Bradshaw and his party having successfully accomplished their purpose without any loss, hurried back as fast as they could, and acting upon Rosworm's

instructions, made an attack upon the battery. But being hotly pursued by a company of dragoons headed by Frank Standish, they were compelled to beat a hasty retreat, and several of them were cut down, or made prisoners before they could reach the barrier at the end of Deansgate.

Standish attempted to follow them, but was driven back. Resolved, however, to gain an entrance at some other point, he rode further on, and then dismounting with a dozen men, scaled the walls and killed the sentinel who opposed him. He might have succeeded in his purpose, had not Rosworm appeared at the juncture with a party of musketeers, and forced him to retire.

All Standish gained by the exploit was a prisoner. Having captured a young soldier

on the walls, he carried him off in his retreat.

Little did he suspect at the time that the prisoner he had made was no other than Gertrude Rosworm.

XVI.

THE BURNING OF ALPORT LODGE.

ON that night, Lord Derby, whose headquarters were at Alport Lodge, retired early to rest, being greatly fatigued.

Since the hall was well guarded he did not for a moment imagine it would be attacked, or if any such rash attempt should be made, he never dreamed it would prove successful.

Conceiving himself, therefore, in perfect security, he slept soundly, but was roused from his slumbers by shouts and the loud

beating of a drum, followed by the discharge of musketry.

These alarming sounds announced that the foe was upon them, and springing from his couch, he proceeded hastily to attire himself, and had nearly completed his toilette, when Frank Standish rushed into the room, with dismay depicted on his countenance.

“You look scared,” said the earl. “What has happened? Speak!”

“A sortie has been made from the town, my lord,” replied Standish.

“But no harm has been done?” interrupted the earl.

“Much mischief, I grieve to say, has been done, my lord,” rejoined Standish. “We have been taken by surprise. The enemy contrived to pass the sentinels unperceived.”

"But they have been driven off?" cried the earl.

"They have, my lord. But they have succeeded in their aim. They have set fire to the hall."

"Set fire to the hall!" exclaimed the earl, rushing to the window, and looking forth. "Gracious heaven, it is so!"

"Every effort, I fear, to extinguish the fire will be unavailing, my lord," said Standish.

"I hope not," cried the earl. "'Twill be grievous, indeed, if this fine old mansion should be destroyed. That calamity must be prevented if possible. I will see to the work myself. Do not tarry here. Pursue the foe, and bring back all the prisoners you can."

Standish required no further orders, but hurrying off, mounted his horse, and accompanied by a party of troopers, rode

swiftly towards the town—with what result has already been shown.

On descending to the lower part of the house, Lord Derby found the whole place in confusion.

Already the fire had made considerable progress, and the entrance-hall and passages were filled with smoke. Serving-men and soldiers were hurrying hither and thither; removing various articles under the direction of Sir Edward Mosley, who maintained the greatest composure at this trying juncture. When Lord Derby expressed his belief that the hall might yet be preserved, Sir Edward shook his head.

“Alas! no,” he said. “The place is doomed.”

The earl then went forth into the courtyard, where he found Sir Thomas Tyldesley, Sir Gilbert Gerard, Sir Alexander Radcliffe, Sir Gilbert Hoghton, Mr. Prestwich,

and others, who were encouraging the soldiers in their efforts to extinguish the fire.

But it was evidently impossible to arrest the progress of destruction. The fire burnt swiftly, the building being old and dry, and constructed, as we have already explained, of wood and plaster.

The incendiaries had done their work well. They had set fire to some outbuildings, which quickly communicated with the mansion. One side of the quadrangle was entirely on fire, and the flames were extending rapidly. Unfortunately, no water could be procured.

By command of the Earl of Derby an attempt was made to pull down a portion of the building, but the flames advanced with such rapidity that it could not be accomplished. They had now reached the roof, and bursting forth, soared aloft, lighting up a portion of the park, and even illuminat-

ing the walls of the town, and the lofty tower of the Collegiate Church.

Viewed from the south walls, the spectacle of the burning mansion was exceedingly fine, and was contemplated by several hundreds of the inhabitants who looked upon it as an interposition of Heaven in their behalf. Even the Royalists themselves felt dismayed.

A new source of alarm now arose. Sir Edward Mosley suddenly recollected that a couple of barrels of powder were stowed away in a cellar beneath the house, and he gave orders that they should be immediately removed. Several soldiers were willing to make the hazardous attempt. But it was now too late. The fire had got so near the entrance that no one could descend into the cellar with safety. The only hope was that the barrels might escape the sparks.

However, since the risk was imminent, all the persons assembled in the court-yard, or on the terrace in front of the house, including the servants, men and women, were ordered to withdraw at once to a certain distance from the burning mansion.

The order was promptly obeyed. Everybody hurried off, and they had only just reached a place of safety when a tremendous explosion took place, completely destroying the house, scattering the burning fragments in every direction, and seeming to shake the very ground.

A grand, but terrible sight, it powerfully affected all the beholders. Lord Derby, who with Sir Edward Mosley, Sir Thomas Tyldesley, and the others, was standing at a distance, expressed his great concern.

“You will now have to seek a lodging

elsewhere, my lord," observed Sir Edward Mosley.

"Come with me to Ordsall," said Sir Alexander Radcliffe.

"No, I shall not leave the spot," rejoined the earl, in a sombre voice. "As soon as it is dark I will attack the town."

"I am glad to hear it," remarked Sir Thomas Tyldesley.

The destruction of Alport Lodge was witnessed with exultation from the walls, where, as we have said, a great number of the townspeople were now gathered. Their rejoicing found expression in a hymn, in which so many voices joined, that it reached the ears of the Royalists.

Amongst those on the walls was Rosworm. But he was greatly troubled. His beloved daughter had disappeared, and no doubt had been carried off as a prisoner.

XVII.

WHITHER GERTRUDE WAS TAKEN.

NEXT morning, as soon as it became light, the blackened ruins of the fine old hall presented a dismal spectacle, and inspired all the Royalists who gazed upon them with a fierce desire of vengeance.

Soon afterwards, the ordnance at the battery began to play upon the town, and the firing was continued without intermission for nearly three hours, but without doing any material damage.

An attack was likewise made by the Earl

of Derby in person on the battery at the end of Deansgate, but the defence of Captain Bradshaw and his men was so determined that an entrance could not be gained, and the earl, to his great mortification, was compelled to retire.

Sir Thomas Tyldesley attacked the barrier in Market-street Lane, but with equal ill success, and the constant attempts by the Royalist soldiers to scale the walls at various points, resulted in failure.

The same ill fortune attended Lord Molineux and Sir John Girlington in Salford. The bridge was so stoutly defended by Rosworm that they could not cross it, and sustained heavy loss in the attempt.

Finding that no impression could be made upon the town, and apprehensive that another sortie might be made at night by Captain Bradshaw, Lord Derby caused a

deep trench to be digged at the end of Deansgate, and though the engineers were protected by a large party of musketeers, three or four were shot before the work could be completed.

During the greater part of the morning, Frank Standish had been so much occupied that he had no time to attend to the prisoners, but committed their charge to a sergeant, by whom they were placed in a farm-house, about a quarter of a mile off, a guard being stationed near the building to prevent their escape.

Later in the day, Standish rode to this farm-house, and dismounting at the door entered the building.

While he was looking about, the farmer's wife, a middle-aged woman, came to him, and said :

“We have made a strange discovery.

One of the prisoners who was brought from the town last night proves to be a young damsel."

Standish uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"What is more," pursued the woman, she is the daughter of Colonel Rosworm, the German engineer, who has fortified the town. My daughter Joan recognised her at once."

"This is strange, indeed!" cried Standish. "Where is she?"

"In an inner room," replied the woman. "Joan is with her. She persuaded her to lay aside her soldier's dress she had put on, and has lent her a gown that fits her exactly."

"Take me to her at once, I pray you," said Standish.

The good woman complied, and ushered

him into a small room, where he found Gertrude and the rustic maiden, who was really very pretty.

"Little did I dream what a prize I had made," said Standish. "But you will not have to endure a long captivity. Before night you shall be exchanged."

"I have nothing to complain of," said Gertrude. "Good Mistress Bancroft and her daughter Joan have been exceedingly kind to me. But, I fear, my father will be uneasy about me."

At this juncture, a noise was heard outside the cottage, and it presently appeared that it was caused by the arrival of the Earl of Derby, who came to look after the prisoners. His lordship was greatly surprised to learn that Rosworm's daughter was a captive.

"I have just caused a parley to be

sounded," he said, "and am about to send a messenger to the governor. You shall go with him. Tell your father that, but for him, I should long since have taken the town. Had he served the King as well as he has served the Parliament, the rebellion would soon have been crushed."

"I will not fail to tell him what your lordship says," replied Gertrude.

"Methinks, my lord," said Standish, "since we have obtained this prize, we ought not to part with her. Let her remain with these good folks. Her father ought to pay a heavy ransom. If he wants her, let him come for her."

"I am quite willing to take charge of her," said Mistress Bancroft.

"And I will attend upon her," added Joan.

"Be it so," said the earl. "You must

be content to remain a prisoner for a short time longer, fair damsel," he added. "But be not alarmed. You are in no danger here."

"I have no fear, my lord," she rejoined "But I pray that my father may be informed that I am in safety."

"It shall be done," said the earl. "Captain Standish will deliver your message to him."

And followed by Standish, he quitted the room.

A troop of horse was drawn up in the farm-yard. Giving a paper to Standish, he bade him ride to the town, and present it to the governor.

"A parley has been sounded," said the earl, "so that admittance to the town will be granted you. The missive is a summons to surrender. Bring back an answer if you

can. But I am willing to grant a delay of twelve hours, should it be required, during which truce all acts of hostility must cease on either side."

XVIII.

THE EARL OF DERBY HAS AN INTERVIEW WITH ROSWORM.

STANDISH then rode towards the town attended by a trumpeter, who blew a loud blast as they approached the Deansgate barrier.

As soon as Captain Bradshaw learnt his errand, he allowed his advance, and sent on a couple of troopers with him to the market-place, where he found Colonel Holland on horseback, with Rosworm.

"I bring your excellency another message from the Earl of Derby," said Standish.

“His lordship summons you once more in the king’s name to surrender the town—to lay down your arms, and deliver them up to him.”

“Aught more?” inquired Colonel Holland, exchanging a look with Rosworm, who smiled sternly.

“He demands that a thousand pounds be delivered to him; and he further requires three hundred muskets, in addition to those which you will give up.”

“We are more likely to demand muskets than to yield up ours,” observed the governor, dryly.

“If his lordship’s demands are agreed to he will raise the siege,” said Standish.

“We shall force him to raise the siege,” remarked Rosworm.

“Then you refuse the terms offered you?” said Standish.

“Peremptorily,” said the governor. “We

have no fear of his lordship. We can certainly hold out against him till we are reinforced by the Parliament. Nevertheless, we agree to the proposed truce, and will suspend hostilities for twelve hours. You shall then have our final answer."

The interview being ended, Standish was about to ride off, but Rosworm stopped him.

"A word with you, sir, ere you depart," he said. "My daughter is a prisoner—will she be delivered up?"

"I have no authority to make any promise respecting her," replied Standish. "But I doubt not she will be restored to you to-morrow. Meantime, you may rest assured she will be well cared for."

"Lord Derby will do an act worthy of his name, by restoring her at once," observed Rosworm.

"I will tell his lordship what you say;

but I can make no promise," rejoined Standish.

And saluting the governor, he rode off.

It being announced that a short suspension of arms had been agreed upon by both sides, firing entirely ceased, and perfect tranquillity reigned within the town.

But the greatest vigilance was exercised by the besiegers in order to prevent any provisions from being brought into the town, and all the entrances were strictly watched. No supplies could, therefore, be obtained by the inhabitants. But they did not feel uneasy; for although their ammunition was well-nigh exhausted, and their provisions were running low, they believed Heaven would aid them.

As usual, a nocturnal service was held in the Collegiate Church, and it was attended by an immense number of persons. Amongst the congregation was Rosworm,

and as he was quitting the building, his eye fell upon a figure in the throng.

The individual in question was a stranger to him, but the countenance was so remarkable, that he could not fail to be struck by it. The attire of the person, and his long dark locks, showed he was not a Round-head. Yet who could he be? A strange suspicion crossed him that it was the Earl of Derby, but he dismissed the notion as soon as formed, and proceeded to his own dwelling, which we have already mentioned adjoined the church. He had reached the door, and was about to enter, when the mysterious individual, who must have followed him at a distance, came up.

“Can I have a few words with you, Colonel Rosworm?” said the person.

Rosworm answered in the affirmative, and as soon as the stranger had entered, he barred the door.

A lamp was burning on the table, and taking it up, he threw its light on a stately figure. He could not doubt that the Earl of Derby stood before him.

"My lord," he said, "you have done rashly in entering the town in this fashion."

"I have no fear that you will betray me," rejoined the earl—for it was he.

"Hum!" cried Rosworm. "Your lordship has voluntarily placed yourself in my hands. I should not be doing my duty were I to allow you to depart."

"You will not hinder me," said the earl.

"Wherefore not, my lord?" rejoined Rosworm.

"Because a promise has been given me," said the earl.

"By whom?" demanded Rosworm.

"By me," responded Gertrude, rushing

from the inner room, and throwing herself into his arms.

For a few moments emotion kept Rosworm silent. He then asked :

“Didst thou bring Lord Derby here?”

“I did, father,” she replied. “I enabled him to enter the town, and brought him to this house. Moreover, I promised him in your name that he should return in safety.”

Rosworm made no remark, and she went on.

“I could not do otherwise, since his lordship desired it. He had set me free.”

“I wished to have some talk with you,” said the earl, “and took this means of obtaining my wish.”

“My lord,” said Rosworm, gravely, “if you design to make any proposition to me, understand that I cannot listen to it.”

“I do not wish to shake your fidelity,”

said the earl. "But this siege cannot last long. When it is over, will you enter into my service? You know Lathom House?"

"I have heard of it, my lord. 'Tis a strong place."

"I mean to garrison it for the king," said the earl. "Will you aid the Countess of Derby to defend it? I will make it worth your while to do so."

For a few minutes Rosworm made no reply, and seemed debating the matter within himself.

"Accept the offer, I entreat you, father!" said Gertrude.

"I do not wish you to desert your present post," said the Earl of Derby. "If I understand aright, you have not a permanent engagement with the Governor of Manchester."

"Your lordship has been correctly informed," rejoined Rosworm.

“When this siege is ended, you will be free?” pursued the earl.

“I shall, my lord,” replied Rosworm.

“Then you can join with me?” said Lord Derby.

“The Manchester men might calumniate me, and say that I had been bought,” rejoined Rosworm.

“Heed them not!” cried Gertrude. “You will have fully discharged your engagement to them.”

“Not till then do I ask you to join me,” said the earl. “I recognise the honourable principles by which you are actuated.”

“My lord,” said Rosworm, “I am a mercenary soldier, but I am, also, a man of honour. If the Manchester men desire to retain me, I shall continue with them. If not, I will come to your lordship. I can make no other promise.”

“I must own that I am grievously disappointed,” observed the earl. “I persuaded myself you would be proud to serve the Countess of Derby.”

“The countess, I know, is one of the noblest ladies in the land,” rejoined Rosworm; “and her courage, I doubt not, is equal to her high rank—but I must abide by my engagement.”

“Enough!” cried the earl. “I deem your scruples idle—but will say no more. I am sorry on your account, fair damsel,” he added to Gertrude. “The countess would have been glad to have you with her.”

“And I should have been delighted to serve her ladyship,” cried Gertrude, eagerly.

“You shall do so, if your father will part with you,” said the earl.

“May I accept the offer, father?” cried Gertrude, imploringly.

"E'en as thou wilt," rejoined Rosworm.
"I will not hinder thee."

"Then come to Lathom when this siege is ended," said the earl. "Perchance, your father may bring you."

"I hope so, my lord," she replied.

"I make no promise," said Rosworm.
"But I repeat thou art free to do as thou wilt."

"Are you in earnest, father?" she asked.

"Quite in earnest," he replied. "You have my full consent to the step."

"Then we shall expect you at Lathom ere long," said the earl.

"I will come, my lord, joyfully," she replied.

"My business here is done," said the earl. "Colonel Rosworm you must see me safely out of the town."

"I will, my lord," replied the other. "'Tis lucky the night is dark. But you had best

pull your hat over your brows, and hide your face with your cloak, or you may be discovered. I am ready to attend your lordship," he added, unbarring the door.

"Good-night, fair damsel," said the earl.
"Our next meeting will be at Lathom."

And he quitted the house with Rosworm.

XIX.

HOW ROSWORM GOT THE EARL OUT OF THE TOWN.

It wanted but an hour of midnight as Rosworm and the earl sallied forth, and the street was almost deserted at that time.

Crossing the churchyard, they proceeded along Cateaton-street, and had reached Smithy Door, when they encountered a patrol. It consisted of a dozen men belonging to the town-guard, and was headed by Captain Cranage, who commanded them to halt in a loud authoritative tone.

Rosworm immediately gave the counter-

sign, but Cranage did not appear entirely satisfied, and turning to Lord Derby demanded his name.

The earl made no reply, whereupon Rosworm interposed, and said :

“ ’Tis sufficient he is with me.”

“ I do not like his appearance,” said Cranage. “ He must give an account of himself to the governor. Come with me,” he added to the earl.

Lord Derby, however, did not move, and the order being repeated, he put his hand to his sword.

The action did not pass unnoticed by Cranage, who ordered two of his men to seize him and bring him along.

“ Off!” cried the earl, fiercely, as they advanced to execute the order. “ You will touch me at your peril.”

Rosworm now deemed it necessary to interpose.

“Meddle not with him,” he said. “I will answer for him.”

“He has the appearance of a malignant,” said Cranage. “If he is a Parliamentary he will not object to come before the governor.”

“It is needless, I tell you,” cried Rosworm. “I have already said I will answer for him. Would you set up your authority against mine? Stand aside, and let us pass.”

Cranage did not venture to offer any further resistance, for he feared he might be reprimanded by the governor. He therefore allowed Rosworm and his companion to proceed; but when they had got to a certain distance, he quitted his men and followed them.

He saw them proceed to Saint Mary's Gate, and fancied they halted near the conduit, but on arriving at this spot he

could see nothing of them. No one was near who could give him any information.

He hurried to the end of Market-street Lane, and then to Deansgate, but seeing nothing of them in either thoroughfare, he mounted the walls, and addressing a sentinel, asked whether he had seen Colonel Rosworm?

"He was here not five minutes ago," replied the man. "He was making his rounds, and came from Deansgate."

"Was he alone?" inquired Cranage, eagerly.

"I cannot tell," rejoined the sentinel. "I thought I saw some one with him at a distance. But if it were so, the person must have left him suddenly."

"He has escaped," muttered Cranage. "I believe it to be the Earl of Derby himself!"

XX.

HOW THE SIEGE WAS RAISED BY COMMAND OF THE KING.

NEXT day, a council of war was held by Lord Derby and the chief Royalist gentlemen at Hulme Hall, the seat of Mr. Thomas Prestwich.

At this meeting, Lord Molineux and Sir John Girlington assisted, and it was unanimously resolved that, if the terms offered should be refused by Colonel Holland and the Parliament officers, the siege should be vigorously carried on.

Sir Thomas Tyldesley thought it would

be better to burn down the town without delay than allow the garrison to wait for the reinforcements, and in this proposition the majority of the council entirely concurred.

Every preparation, therefore, was made for the renewal of hostilities at the expiration of the armistice, in case the conditions offered by Lord Derby should be rejected. A council was likewise held by the Parliamentarians, in which the only voice in favour of peace was Colonel Holland's, but he was overruled, the militia and townsfolk declaring they would rather shed their last drop of blood than deliver up the town.

An early morning service took place in the Collegiate Church, and a sermon was preached by Warden Heyrick. Discourses were likewise delivered in various parts of the town by the different ministers, and hymns sung. In this manner the ardour

of the townspeople was greatly inflamed, and no one would hear of a surrender.

When the hour arrived for the delivery of the answer, Colonel Holland rode forth from Deansgate, attended by Captains Radcliffe, Bradshaw, and Booth, and followed by a company of well-mounted and well-armed horsemen.

They were watched by a great number of the townsfolk, men and women, who were collected on the walls facing Alport Park, and by Rosworm and his daughter from the summit of the church-tower.

About a bow-shot from the gate was stationed the Earl of Derby, completely armed, and mounted on a noble charger. His lordship was closely attended by Frank Standish, and at a little distance were Sir Thomas Tyldesley, Sir Alexander Radcliffe, Sir Edward Mosley, and Mr. Prestwich.

Behind was drawn up the whole of the

Royalist cavalry and dragoons—each troop having a captain—and yet further on were the foot soldiers, altogether forming a splendid sight.

At the battery behind the trench recently dug in front of Deansgate, cannon was planted, and the artillerymen were in readiness. Everything betokened that a grand attack could at once be made upon the town, if necessary.

On the other hand, though little display was made, no preparations for the defence had been neglected by Rosworm.

On Colonel Holland's approach Lord Derby rode forward to meet him, and courteous salutations passed between them. After they had exchanged a few words, the earl said :

“I hope my offer can be accepted, colonel, and that we shall be able to come to an amicable understanding.”

“I fear not, my lord,” replied the governor, assuming a grave expression. “I am as anxious as your lordship can be that the effusion of blood should be stayed, and that the horrors of a civil war should be avoided, but this can only be accomplished in one way, and it does not rest with us. Hitherto, Heaven has fought on our side, so that we have been able to resist every attack made upon us. It is idle, therefore, to suppose we shall surrender the town while we are able to keep it. The siege must be raised by your lordship, if peace is to be made between us.”

“Never will I raise the siege, colonel,” rejoined Lord Derby firmly, “unless by his majesty’s express command. The bloody strife must, therefore, continue. But be not too confident that you can maintain the town. That I have underrated your strength I freely admit—but in concluding

you can hold out you are equally mistaken."

"We can hold out till we are relieved, my lord," said the governor. "Reinforcements are certain to be sent us by the Parliament."

"But they may be cut off," rejoined the earl. "Prince Rupert will take care they do not reach you."

"We have little apprehension on that score, my lord," said the governor. "Prince Rupert will be wanted by the king."

"Then all my attempts at pacification are vain," said the earl. "In an hour I shall recommence the attack. Be not surprised if we should visit the town to-night."

"In that case I must prepare for your lordship's reception," rejoined the governor.

And courteously saluting the earl, he

rode back to the town with his companions.

Scarcely was he gone when Sir Thomas Tyldesley informed the earl that a messenger had just arrived from the king.

"'Tis Captain Galliard," said Sir Thomas; "he has brought this letter for your lordship."

Lord Derby hastily opened the despatch, and glanced at its contents.

In spite of his habitual self-command, he could not conceal his annoyance.

"Your lordship looks disturbed," said Sir Thomas; "I hope you have not received bad news?"

"So bad that I scarcely like to mention them, Sir Thomas," replied the earl. "His majesty has commanded me to raise the siege, and return to Warrington without delay."

"But you will not obey the injunction, my lord," said Tyldesley.

Lord Derby made no reply, but desired to speak with the messenger, whereupon Captain Galliard came forward.

"Are you acquainted with the contents of this despatch, sir?" asked the earl.

"No, my lord," replied Galliard. "I received it from his majesty's own hands, and he bade me tell your lordship that it must be instantly obeyed. I have ridden as hard as I could from Nottingham."

"I would you had arrived an hour later, for the attack would then have commenced," said the earl. "Never before did I feel inclined to disobey his majesty's order. What shall I do, Tyldesley?"

"I dare not counsel you, my lord," replied

the other. "But I know what I would do myself."

"No ! no ! I must not be disloyal," cried the earl.

Then turning to Sir Alexander Radcliffe and the others, he said :

"Gentlemen, the attack will not be made. I have just received the king's orders to raise the siege forthwith."

They looked at each other in surprise and consternation.

"My lord," said Sir Alexander Radcliffe, "the men will be greatly dissatisfied when they hear the order. They feel certain we should take the town to-day."

"It cannot be helped," rejoined the earl.

Then turning to Standish, he bade him cross the river at Ordsall, and proceed as quickly as he could to Salford to communi-

cate the intelligence to Lord Molineux and Sir John Girlington.

“Take Captain Galliard with you,” he added.

Standish immediately rode off on his errand, accompanied by the messenger.

Nothing could exceed the dissatisfaction of the soldiers when the order was made known to them.

The arrival of Captain Galliard and his interview with the earl had been witnessed by Rosworm from the summit of the church-tower, and he at once inferred from the subsequent proceedings that the siege would be raised, and communicated his opinion to the governor.

The opinion seemed confirmed, when no attack was made.

All remained quiet throughout the day, and nothing was heard during the night,

but when Rosworm looked from the church tower next morn, the bridge was clear—the besiegers were gone from Salford, and from Alport Park, and had taken their ordnance with them.

End of Book the First.

Book the Second.

**CHARLOTTE DE LA TRÉMOILLE, COUNTESS
OF DERBY.**

I.

LATHOM HOUSE.

ABOUT a week after the siege of Manchester had been raised in the manner previously related, the Earl of Derby, accompanied by Lord Molineux and Sir John Girlington, and attended by a large body of men, set out from Wigan—one of the few towns in Lancashire that remained perfectly faithful to the king, and took his way towards Lathom House.

As he came in sight of the stronghold, he remarked with a stern smile to those near him :

“That house will never be taken by the rebels.”

Lathom House was certainly a magnificent pile, and so large that, according to an old poem, “within it could be lodged kyngys three.” It was also at Lathom House that a former Earl of Derby had dwelt in such state, that it was said by Camden, “that with his death the glory of English hospitality had fallen asleep.” Equal hospitality had likewise been exercised in the same lordly mansion by James Earl of Derby until the breaking out of the Civil War, when he had been obliged to fortify the house, and arm the greater part of his servants and retainers.

Nothing could be more striking and picturesque than the appearance of Lathom House at the period of our story

It was a vast embattled mansion, crowned with turrets, from the midst of which rose

a lofty square tower, called the Eagle Tower. From the summit of this tower was displayed the proud banner of the Stanleys, bearing the loyal motto—*SANS CHANGER*.

Originally built in the reign of Henry the Seventh, Lathom House is said to have furnished that monarch with the design of Richmond Palace. Possessing a very grand and imposing exterior, it contained many noble apartments—an immense banquetting-hall, and a grand presence-chamber. Attached to it was a beautiful chapel. The outer court, which was of considerable extent, and contained large stables and other buildings intended for the garrison, was surrounded by strong battlemented walls, defended by nine towers, each provided with six large pieces of cannon—three placed to fire one way, and three the other. The walls were encompassed by

an unusually wide and deep moat, the inner banks of which were defended by a row of stout palisades. The walls were strengthened internally by earthworks, two feet in thickness. The gatehouse was exceedingly lofty and strong, and its machiolated battlements and tall towers were furnished with ordnance; while the entrance was protected by a drawbridge and double portcullis.

“There is something particular and romantic in the situation of this house,” says Archdeacon Rutter, “as if nature herself had formed it for a stronghold, or place of security. The uncommon situation of it may be compared to the palm of a man’s hand, flat in the middle, and covered with a rising round about it, and so near to it, that the enemy in two years were never able to raise a battery against it so as to make a breach in the wall practicable to enter the house by way of storm.”

The ground on which Lathom House stood was a moorish tract, but thoroughly drained by the moat. At a short distance from the mansion there was a park, and embosomed among the trees was Burscough Priory—a convent of Black Canons, founded by Robert Fitz-Henry, Lord of Lathom, in the reign of Richard the First.

Wherever it could be seen, this strong castellated mansion, with its great gatehouse, embattled walls, numerous turrets, and lofty central tower presented a most imposing appearance.

In the presence-chamber, and in a high-backed ebony chair, sat a majestic dame. She could not be called young, yet she was still exceedingly handsome, and possessed a full, stately figure. Her manner was dignified, and at times haughty, and her look showed she was accustomed to command. Her eyes were remarkably

fine, of a dark hazel, fringed with long silken lashes, and arched over by finely pencilled brows. Her dark tresses were brought in small curls over her brow and flowed down in ringlets at the side and at the back, according to the then charming mode. She wore a collar of pearls, and large pearl ear-rings. Her gown was of black velvet, trimmed with lace, and her stomacher was adorned with pearls. In the peculiar grace of her manner, as in her speech, there was something that showed she was of French origin.

Need we say this was Charlotte de la Trémoille, Countess of Derby? From her charms and her ability, it is not wonderful that she held such sway over her noble husband.

With the countess were her three daughters, ranging from ten to thirteen—lovely creatures, dressed in white satin, and wear-

ing their hair in the same becoming fashion as their mother. All three had fine bright eyes and charming features. The elder—the Lady Henriette Marie Stanley, to whom the queen had stood godmother, was tall, and possessed a slight graceful figure. When of tender age she had been contracted to Lord Molineux. Lady Katherine, the second daughter, was about a year younger than her sister, and equally beautiful. A blonde, with light blue eyes, fair tresses, a delicate complexion, she had a very gentle expression of countenance, and a very engaging manner.

If we may be permitted to glance into the future, we may mention that the Lady Katherine was subsequently wedded to Henry Pierrepont, second Earl of Kingston-upon-Hull, and was buried at Hurstpierpoint, in Sussex.

The liveliest, and perhaps the most at-

tractive of the three girls, was the Lady Amelia — a bright little brunette, with sparkling black eyes, and a brilliant complexion. Again to forecast the future, it may be mentioned that this lovely creature — her mother's favourite — became Marchioness of Athole. She was now playing with her little brothers, Edward and William.

Edward, a grave-looking boy then some four years old, was dressed in black velvet, and his dark hair, brought over his brow, made him look like a miniature of the earl, his father, to whom his features bore a marked resemblance. William, the youngest of the party, being scarcely three, was seated on a tabouret near the countess, and comported himself well, being a very quiet little boy.

The children we have enumerated constituted the whole of Lord Derby's family,

with the exception of Charles, Lord Strange, born in 1628, who was then in Holland.

A middle-aged nurse, of discreet appearance, and attired in very sober apparel, was in attendance upon the younger children.

No one else was present at the moment, though different members of the household from time to time entered the hall. The countess looked unusually cheerful, for she expected the earl from Wigan on that day. Of necessity his lordship had been long absent from home, so that his return was eagerly looked for by his family.

“Do you think our father will really return to-day, dearest mother?” inquired Lady Katherine. “We have been so often disappointed that I almost despair of beholding him again.”

The countess heaved a sigh, for she, too, had been often disappointed; but her face brightened as she answered :

“Yes—I feel sure you will see him to-day, Kate.”

“But will he bring Lord Molineux with him?” cried the Lady Henriette Marie, eagerly.

“I cannot answer for that,” replied the countess, with a smile. “But make yourself easy. Unless Lord Molineux is obliged to remain at Wigan—which I think unlikely—he will certainly come.”

“Oh! I hope he will,” cried Henriette. “But what was that? I thought I heard a noise in the outer court. They may have arrived. Shall I go forth and see?”

“No! stay where you are! We shall learn presently.”

It was evident from the sounds that an arrival had taken place, and the countess herself could scarcely control her impatience, when Doctor Rutter entered the hall, and hastened towards her. His looks showed

that he brought some important intelligence.

“Prepare yourself for a great surprise, madam,” said the chaplain. “You will scarce credit me when I inform you that the queen has just arrived at the castle.”

“Impossible! her majesty is at York,” said the countess.

“She is at this moment in the courtyard of the castle,” replied the chaplain. “I have spoken to her myself. She has just come from York, and is proceeding to Chester. She is attended by Lord Goring and Lord Jermyn and a small escort.”

“She runs great risk in passing thus through Lancashire,” cried the countess, who had listened in astonishment to what was told her. “But I must not sit here. Come with me, girls,” she added to her daughters, who were equally astonished with herself.

Without waiting to give any orders to

Master Cunliffe, the major-domo, who had now made his appearance with Daniel Trioche, the earl's confidential attendant, and several other servants, she hastened forth, accompanied by her daughters and Doctor Rutter.

II.

QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA.

THE court-yard was full of soldiers, for the garrison had turned out at once as soon they became aware that the queen had arrived, and shouts rent the air, while drums were beaten and trumpets blown.

Her majesty had just dismounted from her palfrey, being assisted by Lord Goring, who was now standing beside her. Close behind were Lord Jermyn, Sir Edward Dering, and several other Cavaliers of inferior rank. Behind them was the escort,

which consisted only of a party of fifty well-armed men.

Not far from the queen stood Captain Chisenhale, Captain Rawsthorne, and Captain Ogle, with other officers of the garrison, who were waiting to conduct her majesty to the hall; but on the appearance of the countess and her daughters they stopped, and formed themselves into two lines.

Despite the constant anxiety she had recently experienced, Queen Henrietta Maria looked remarkably well. Possessing great courage and spirit, she never succumbed to difficulties and dangers. Her personal charms were still unimpaired, her fine black eyes being brilliant as ever, and her tresses as dark and lustrous as when she first met her royal husband. Her features had lost none of their beauty.

Though not tall, the queen was perfectly proportioned, and remarkable for grace.

Her majesty wore a riding dress of green velvet embroidered with gold, and a broad-leaved Spanish hat, with a white plume, secured by a diamond buckle.

As the countess approached, she advanced to meet her, and prevented her from making an obeisance—professing herself delighted to see her and her daughters.

The discourse that took place between her majesty and Lady Derby was conducted in French.

“You are right welcome to Lathom, gracious madam,” said the countess. “In my noble husband’s name, I place the castle, and all within it—men, munitions, and stores—at your entire disposal. Your majesty has only to give your orders and they will be obeyed.”

“I thank you from the bottom of my heart, dearest countess,” replied the queen, very much touched. “I know your devotion to the king and myself, and should feel perfectly secure at Lathom, which I now find is quite as strong as it has been represented to me, but I do not propose to stay here long. I am on the way to Chester, and shall proceed thence to Oxford to join the king. My object in coming here was to consult the Earl of Derby, but I find he is absent.”

“His lordship is momentarily expected from Wigan, gracious madam,” replied the countess. “But I will at once despatch a messenger to him on a fleet horse to acquaint him with your arrival.”

“Since you expect him that is sufficient,” said the queen. “I can wait. I shall be glad to pass a short time with you and your fair daughters. How well they

are looking," she added, smiling graciously upon them, and embracing each in turn.

"Do you know that you are my god-daughter?" she remarked to the eldest.

"Indeed I do. I am very proud of being named after your majesty," replied Henriette, blushing deeply.

"I have not much to offer you, mignonnette, for I have sold all my jewels to help the king. But I pray you wear this ring for my sake."

And as she spoke she took off a ring and placed it on Henriette's finger.

"I will never part with it, gracious madam," said the noble damsel, delighted.

While this was passing, the countess addressed Lord Goring, Lord Jermyn, Sir Edward Dering, and the rest of the queen's attendants, and bade them welcome with the refined courtesy she knew so well how to practise.

All the Cavaliers were splendidly accoutred, and made a very gallant show in their glittering cuirasses, richly embroidered baldricks, scarves, and plumed hats.

As we have said, the two nobles were accounted the handsomest men belonging to the Court, and were especial favourites of the queen.

Lord Derby believed they were secretly hostile to him, and though the countess entertained the same impression, she did not allow it to influence her reception of them.

At this juncture the major-domo, with two yeomen-ushers, all three bearing white wands, came up, for the purpose of conducting her majesty to the house, and the queen was about to proceed thither, when an interruption occurred. Trumpets were blown from the summit of the gate-house, announcing the Earl of Derby's return, and,

on hearing these sounds, the queen remained stationary.

Immediately afterwards the great gates were thrown open, and the earl, with Lord Molineux, Sir Thomas Tyldesley, Sir John Girlington, and closely attended by Captain Standish, rode into the court, followed by a large troop of horse. Loud shouts at the same time arose from the garrison, who were rejoiced to behold their lord again.

Great was Lord Derby's surprise when he found the place occupied as we have described; but the moment he learnt that the queen was present, he flung himself from the saddle, and made his way to the spot where she was standing, followed by Lord Molineux and the others.

"Welcome! thrice welcome! gracious madam," he cried, bending the knee before her. "Lathom is greatly honoured by this unlooked-for visit. Could I have an-

ticipated it, I would have made every preparation for your reception! But I frankly own I did not expect to find your majesty here."

"Nor had I any such intention when I left York, my lord," she replied, praying him to rise. "I will explain the object of my visit anon. For a time I place myself under your care, knowing I shall be well guarded by the loyal Earl of Derby."

"Your majesty is as safe here as you were at York," replied the earl. "Deign to enter the house."

Then bowing haughtily to the Lords Goring and Jermyn, he conducted her majesty towards the entrance of the house, preceded by the major-domo and the ushers—a large retinue of servants having ranged themselves on either side of the steps.

Seeing that the queen desired to confer

with him in private, Lord Derby led her to the lower end of the presence-chamber.

No one followed them. All the courtiers and Royalist gentlemen remained with the countess, in the centre of the large apartment.

“Madam,” said the earl, “I am prepared to listen to aught your majesty may have to say to me.”

“My lord,” said the queen, after a brief pause, “I am aware that your loyalty has been heavily taxed, and very inadequately rewarded—but I must put it to a further test.”

“Hesitate not to command me, madam. Aught I can do for his majesty and yourself shall be done.”

“You have, indeed, a noble and a generous heart, my lord,” said the queen. “I was told you deeply resented some sup-

posed injuries done you, and attributed them to my influence with the king. But I resolved to trust you. I am here—in your stronghold. Were you the traitor your enemies would have me believe, you could deliver me up, and make your own terms with the Parliament.”

“Those who have charged me with treasonable designs have belied me, madam,” rejoined the earl, with difficulty controlling himself, and speaking with forced calmness. “This is not the moment to call them to account, but the time will come when I will force them to confess the falsehood. I will make no idle professions of loyalty. My acts speak for themselves. But thus much I will say—I am ready to sacrifice my life for the king, and all my possessions are at his majesty’s disposal. With such feelings could I prove faithless to your majesty?”

“No, my lord,” replied the queen, emphatically; “nor did I ever suspect you of treachery. But let us dismiss this matter. I have come to you for aid, and I do not think you will refuse it me.”

“Assuredly not, madam,” said the earl; “you shall have all the aid I can give you, either in men or money.”

“It is the latter that I want, my lord,” rejoined the queen. “The king’s necessities are very great—greater even than you imagine. Your lordship is aware that I sold all my jewels and plate in Holland, and though a very large sum was raised by this sacrifice—for sacrifice it was—more—much more—is needed.”

“My coffers are not so well filled as I could desire, madam,” replied the earl. “But all I have is yours.”

“With how much can you supply me, my lord?”

“Not more than a thousand pounds, madam,” he replied.

“Cannot a larger sum be borrowed?” she cried with a look of deep disappointment.

“I may, perhaps, be able to obtain two or three thousand more from Sir Alexander Radcliffe of Ordsall Hall, near Manchester,” replied the earl. “If your majesty can remain here till to-morrow, I will send off a trusty messenger to him forthwith.”

“The matter is so important to the king, my lord, that I must needs wait,” said the queen. “But cannot Lord Molineux aid us?”

“I fear not,” he replied. “The Lancashire Royalists have no funds.”

“’Tis everywhere the same,” said the queen. “The two noblemen with me, and Sir Edward Dering, have, nothing, or next to nothing.”

“I will speak to Sir John Girlington and Sir Thomas Tyldesley presently,” said the earl. “But with your majesty’s permission I will first send off the messenger to Ordsall.”

“I pray you do so, my lord,” said the queen.

Having conducted her majesty to the countess, the earl proceeded to his cabinet, taking with him Doctor Rutter, to whom he imparted his design.

“Shall I send Frank Standish, or Captain Bootle on the errand?” remarked the earl. “Give me your advice, Rutter?”

“Captain Bootle, I think, will be the best, my lord,” rejoined the chaplain. “He is more cautious than Standish, and will run no needless risk. Besides Standish is well known to the Manchester Roundheads, and would be recognised if he chanced to encounter any of them.”

“You are right,” replied the earl. “It would not be prudent to send him. While I write to Sir Alexander Radcliffe, go fetch Captain Bootle, and explain the business to him.”

While Rutter went in quest of the messenger, Lord Derby sat down at a table on which writing materials were laid, and had just finished his letter, when the chaplain returned with Bootle.

Captain Bootle's looks seemed scarcely to warrant the confidence placed in him by the earl and Doctor Rutter, for there was something sinister in the expression of his countenance, caused by a slight obliquity of vision, but he was brave and active, and esteemed a staunch Royalist. He was fully accoutred in breastplate and helmet, and his stout riding-boots were drawn above the knee. Besides the long sword by his side he had pistols in his belt.

“Has Doctor Rutter explained why I have sent for you, Captain Bootle?” said the earl.

“Ay, my lord,” replied the other. “You desire me to take a letter to Sir Alexander Radcliffe of Ordsall Hall, and to bring back a large sum of money.”

“There is much risk in the expedition,” observed the earl. “Take a strong guard with you.”

“If I take a strong guard, my lord, I shall probably be attacked, and may be plundered,” said Bootle. “I would rather go alone; I can reach the hall then unobserved.”

“As you will,” said the earl. “But mind, you will incur a great responsibility.”

“I believe it to be the safest course,” remarked Rutter.

“I am sure it is,” said Bootle.

The earl did not seem altogether satisfied, but he gave him the letter, adding, "Set out at once, and use all the despatch you can. Sir Alexander will furnish you with another horse, and if he deems it needful, will send a guard with you."

Captain Bootle bowed and withdrew.

In less than a quarter of an hour afterwards, he had quitted the hall, and was speeding in the direction of Wigan, whither it was supposed he had been sent, for none, save those concerned in it, were aware of the real nature of his errand.

III.

WHAT THE QUEEN BEHELD FROM THE EAGLE TOWER.

As it was now known that the queen intended to remain at Lathom till the following day, arrangements were immediately made for the accommodation of her majesty and her suite.

This was accomplished without the slightest difficulty, since there were an immense number of rooms in the mansion, as will readily be understood, when we mention that more than two hundred

guests with their attendants had often been lodged within it.

To the queen was assigned a noble apartment in the grand gallery, the walls of which were hung with the choicest arras, while the bedstead presented a magnificent specimen of carved oak. Amid the painted glass of the bay window was a portrait of the Countess of Richmond, mother of Henry the Seventh. Scarcely inferior were the rooms allotted to the principal personages in attendance upon her majesty.

As we have said, the apartments were truly regal, Henry the Seventh's palace at Shene being modelled upon Lathom. Even the queen was struck with the princely character of the mansion. As to her majesty's guard, they had no reason to complain of their quarters.

After a plentiful repast had been served in the great banqueting-hall, the queen

inspected the garrison. Except the musketeers and artillerymen on the walls, the whole of the men, fully armed and accoutred, and having an officer at the head of each company, were drawn up in the court-yard, and presented a very imposing sight. Accustomed to such displays, the queen was able to judge of their efficiency.

“You are better served than his majesty, my lord,” she remarked to the Earl of Derby. “I have no such troops as these elsewhere.”

“I have reason to be proud of them, gracious madam, for they are all my retainers,” replied the earl. “They are ready to fight for his majesty when called upon. But methinks they are best employed in the defence of this castle, which helps to sustain the royal cause in Lancashire.”

“When my husband is absent I have charge of the castle,” said the countess;

“and your majesty may rest assured it shall never be surrendered to rebels.”

“I have no fear of that,” rejoined the queen.

Before quitting the court, the troops marched past the queen, and manifested great enthusiasm.

Her majesty next visited the stables, which, though large enough to hold a hundred horses, were now quite full.

From the stables she proceeded to the magazine and provision stores, and was surprised at the extent of the supplies.

“Your majesty sees we are not unprepared,” said the countess.

“No castle in England can be in better condition,” replied the queen. “But I have not yet completed my survey. From the summit of that lofty tower I could see the whole of the place.”

“Your majesty would find the ascent

fatiguing," remarked the earl. "I do not advise you to attempt it."

"I make no doubt the countess often goes there," said the queen.

"Twice a day regularly, madam," rejoined Lady Derby.

"Then the effort cannot be too great for me!" cried the queen. "Come with me all who list. My lord, I place myself under your guidance."

The Eagle Tower towards which Lord Derby conducted the queen was situated in the centre of the mansion.

In the lower part there was a guard-room wherein half a dozen musketeers were now assembled. From this chamber a wide staircase, that followed each angle of the tower, gradually mounted to the summit. So easy was the ascent that the queen accomplished it without the slightest fatigue. On the appearance of the earl and his illus-

trious visitor, the two sentinels stationed on the leads retired.

Now that the whole of the castle was spread out before her, the queen was surprised at the size of the fabric. With the various buildings and walls it looked like a strongly fortified town. Lord Goring and Lord Jermyn, and her majesty's other attendants, were equally amazed. A smile of satisfaction played upon Lady Derby's countenance, but the earl maintained an immovable demeanour.

The queen was no careless and superficial observer. Not content with a mere glance at the place, she minutely examined the fortifications — noted the immense thickness of the walls, and the strong internal earthworks—numbered the towers and counted the ordnance—and bestowed a second look of scrutiny upon the lofty gatehouse.

Then turning to the Earl of Derby, she remarked :

“ This is a strong castle, my lord—much stronger than I thought.”

“ It was built by my ancestor, the second Lord Stanley, and first Lord Derby,” replied the earl. “ It was a strong place then—but I have made it somewhat stronger.”

“ To me it seems impregnable,” remarked the queen. “ But you must guard against treachery.”

“ I hope we have no traitors at Lathom, gracious madam,” said the countess.

Before descending, the queen surveyed the surrounding district. Owing to the fine weather that prevailed, the view was seen to great advantage.

The lofty position on which she stood

enabled her to overlook the rising ground on the south side of the moat, and beyond the park she beheld a vast moor, almost uncultivated and entirely destitute of timber, that extended nearly to Knowsley.

On the north was another park, in the midst of which was Burscough Priory, a reverend pile, founded some four or five centuries ago by the Lathoms, but now completely deserted, except by a few poor bedesmen, who were allowed to occupy it.

The picturesque structure, however, did not escape the queen's eye, and she put some questions respecting it.

On the west was New Hall, a small mansion belonging to the Earl of Derby, now untenanted, and beyond it, above the trees, could be distinguished the spire of

the old church of Ormskirk, in the vaults of which Earl William had recently been laid beside his ancestors.

On the east, a range of hills shut out the view in the direction of Wigan.

Owing to the large tracts of moss and moor, the country had generally a wild and sterile look—but portions of the prospect were extremely picturesque and beautiful. The parks contained much fine timber, and were well stocked with deer. Up to a late period the Lord of Lathom and Knowsley had been devoted to the chase.

For some time the queen remained gazing on this prospect—turning from one side to the other, and questioning the earl as to any objects that interested her.

After studying the locality in this manner she came to the conclusion that no

better situation for a stronghold could have been chosen.

The two nobles in attendance upon her majesty made few remarks, and held aloof while she was conversing with the earl.

In the evening a banquet, distinguished by as much splendour as had formerly characterised Lord Derby's entertainments, took place in the great hall. In the centre of the dais, under a canopy, sat the queen, and all the most important personages then staying within the mansion were placed on her right and left. Lord Derby waited upon her majesty in person. Nearly a hundred persons sat down at the lower tables—all the officers of the garrison being present.

Thus filled and illumined with torches, the hall presented a magnificent sight. The richest liveries were worn by the servants,

and strains of minstrelsy were heard from the galleries. Trumpets were blown when certain large dishes were set upon the tables, and many old and long-neglected customs were observed.

IV.

HOW GERTRUDE ROSWORM ARRIVED AT LATHOM HOUSE.

THE Earl of Derby's confident expectation that Captain Bootle would return at an early hour on the following morning was not realised.

Not till nearly noon did the messenger make his appearance. Nor had he been successful in his errand. Sir Alexander Radcliffe was absent from Ordsall, and, consequently, the money could not be procured.

The queen was greatly disappointed at

the result of the expedition, and scarcely seemed satisfied with Bootle's excuses. When he was gone she remarked to the earl :

“ I do not like that man's looks. I think he could have brought the money if he would.”

“ He could only have obtained it from Sir Alexander himself, madam, and unfortunately he was absent.”

“ But he would have returned to-night,” cried the queen. “ The messenger ought to have waited.”

“ Doubtless he would have waited, but for the special orders given him,” said the earl. “ But if your majesty can be induced to prolong your stay I will send off another messenger at once.”

“ It will be well to do so, my lord,” said the queen.

Just then, Captain Standish entered the

cabinet wherein the foregoing discourse had taken place between the queen and Lord Derby.

“Pardon this intrusion, gracious madam,” said Standish, bowing. “A youth has just arrived at the castle from Manchester, who has a matter of the utmost importance to communicate to your majesty.”

“From Manchester, say you?” exclaimed the queen. “He may be from Sir Alexander Radcliffe.”

“No, madam, the youth is not from Ordsall,” said Standish.

“Ah! then you know his errand?” cried the queen.

“Of thus much, I am certain, gracious madam — he brings no message from Sir Alexander Radcliffe. His lordship is acquainted with the youth, who has rendered him some slight service.”

“Who is he?” demanded the earl.

“He calls himself Karl Rosworm,” replied Standish. “Your lordship will recognise him at once.”

“Rosworm !” exclaimed the queen. “Why that is the name of the famous German engineer, by whom Manchester has been fortified.”

“And if I am not wrong in my suspicions,” said the earl, a slight smile crossing his features, “this Karl Rosworm is a near relative of the engineer. But your majesty may safely see the youth.”

“He is without, gracious madam” said Standish.

“Admit him, then,” said the queen.

In another minute, a youth of very prepossessing appearance entered the cabinet, and bowed deeply to the queen. His light locks flowed over his shoulders, and heightened the delicate and almost feminine cha-

racter of his features. He was habited in a riding-dress, and the dusty state of his boots showed he had travelled far.

After bringing this youth into the royal presence, Standish would have retired, but the queen signed to him to stay.

“Attempt not to deceive me,” she said to the new-comer, “you are not what you seem.”

“Pardon me, I pray your majesty, for appearing before you in this disguise,” said Gertrude, for it was she. “I required it to come hither. I am the daughter of Colonel Rosworm, but I am a Royalist at heart, as I hope to prove. A plot has been contrived in Manchester against your majesty, and I have come hither—at some hazard to myself—to warn you of it.”

“I thank you for your zeal,” replied the queen. “But I am at a loss to understand how such a plot can have originated.”

“Your majesty’s movements are better known than you imagine,” said Gertrude. “It is known to Colonel Holland and some of the Manchester garrison that your majesty is staying at Lathom, and an attempt will be made to capture you. An ambuscade will be formed into which it is hoped you may fall when you quit the castle. Fearing the design might prove successful, I have come to warn you of it.”

“I thank you heartily for the great service rendered me,” said the queen, “and will requite it. “How can Colonel Holland have obtained this information?” she added, to Lord Derby. “’Tis certain we have been betrayed. But by whom? My own suspicions alight on Captain Bootle.”

“I cannot believe him capable of such villainy,” said the earl. “But he shall at once be placed under arrest. Your majesty can then interrogate him. See it done!”

he added to Standish, who forthwith departed on the errand.

“But for this unlooked-for and untoward incident,” said the earl, “I would have sent a second messenger to Ordsall; but it would not be prudent to do so, since he might fall into the hands of the enemy.”

“Trouble yourself no more about the matter, my lord,” said the queen. “But I shall now need an additional guard to Warrington.”

“I will attend your majesty myself with a strong guard,” said the earl. “I do not think the enemy will venture to attack us.”

At this juncture, Frank Standish returned. But he brought no prisoner with him.

“Where is Captain Bootle?” demanded the earl.

“He has fled, my lord,” replied Standish.

“Fled!” ejaculated the earl. “That proclaims his guilt.”

“The arrival of this disguised damsel seems to have alarmed him,” said Standish. “Feeling sure that a discovery must take place, he mounted his horse, and quitted the castle.”

“But why was he suffered to depart?” cried the earl, angrily.

“No suspicions were entertained of him, my lord,” replied Standish. “Besides, he declared he was sent with a pressing message by your lordship.”

“I will hang the false traitor if I catch him!” cried the earl.

“No doubt he has gone to join Colonel Holland and the rebels, and will direct their design,” said the queen.

“A plan occurs to me by which this design might be effectually defeated,” said Standish. “I know not if your majesty

will approve of the plan, but with your permission I will mention it."

"Let us hear it," said the queen.

"This damsel must play a part in it," rejoined Standish. "Nay, she must personate your majesty."

"Personate me !" exclaimed the queen.

"The success of the scheme depends upon the disguise, gracious madam," said Standish. "With a small party of horse, and accompanied by this damsel—disguised as I have ventured to suggest—I will undertake to lure Colonel Holland and his men from their ambuscade, and it shall not be my fault if they have not a long chase, and in a wrong direction."

"The scheme promises well," remarked the queen. "But how say you, fair maiden ?" she added to Gertrude. "Are you willing to take part in it?"

“Nothing would please me better, madam,” was the eager reply,

“Then be it so,” said the queen.

“The plan cannot be carried out with any chance of success till night,” said the Earl of Derby, who had listened to Standish’s proposition in silence. “Is your majesty content to remain here till then?”

“I do not care for the delay,” she rejoined. “But I must inform my council of my design.”

“Lord Goring and Lord Jermyn are in the banqueting-hall with the countess,” said Lord Derby. “Shall I summon them?”

“No, I will go thither,” said the queen. “Come with me, fair demoiselle,” she added graciously to Gertrude. “I will provide you with a fitting disguise.”

V.

HOW GERTRUDE PERSONATED THE QUEEN.

ALL was arranged as Frank Standish had suggested, and a suitable riding-dress having been found for Gertrude, darkness had no sooner come on, than she rode forth from Lathom House, closely attended by Standish and followed by a party of well-mounted men-at-arms.

They took the road to Wigan, and had not proceeded more than two miles, when they entered a wood. It was here that Standish expected the attack would be

made. Nor was he wrong in the calculation. They had not advanced far when the trampling of a large body of horse was heard behind them. At the same time an officer, who was recognised as Bootle, galloped quickly up, and shouted to them to surrender.

“We know the queen is with you,” he said. “She cannot escape. Yield her up quietly, and your lives shall be spared.”

“We will part with life sooner than yield up our charge,” replied Standish.

“Then we will cut you in pieces and take her,” cried Bootle.

“You will never assist at her capture, villain,” said Standish. “Take the reward of your treachery.”

And plucking a pistol from his belt, he fired, and Bootle fell from his horse, though not mortally wounded.

After this incident, Standish and his men continued to gallop on, but their progress was soon checked by another large party of Parliamentary troopers who were drawn across the road.

"Yield!" shouted Colonel Holland, who commanded the party in front. "If a single shot be fired, every man shall be put to death."

Then riding up to Standish, he said :

"I know you are escorting the queen to Warrington. Where is she?"

Standish made no reply, and Colonel Holland repeated the question in a yet more authoritative and menacing tone.

"If her majesty were here I would never deliver her up to you with life," said Standish.

"This denial is useless," said Holland. "I can see her yonder, surrounded by your men, who vainly attempt to hide her."

“That is not the queen,” said Standish.
“Satisfy yourself on the point.”

“I *am* satisfied,” rejoined Colonel Holland. “I require no further proof. It will be time enough to put any questions to her majesty, when I have conveyed her safely to Manchester. You and your men must accompany me thither.”

“As prisoners?” demanded Standish.

“As prisoners. Resistance would be useless. I therefore recommend you to deliver up your arms quietly.”

The injunction was obeyed. Standish and his men were disarmed, but every respect was paid to her whom the Parliamentary leaders supposed to be the queen; and as Gertrude did not utter a word, and was not required to remove the half-mask that covered her face, no discovery was made.

Meanwhile both divisions of the rebel force had now formed a junction—the

Royalists being placed in the midst, so that the important captive was well guarded.

At the head of the troop rode Colonel Holland, and he now took a road across a moor leading towards Bolton, whence he intended to diverge to Manchester. But he soon found he was followed by a company of horse, whose shouts convinced him they were Royalists.

Anxious to avoid an engagement with them, he quickened his pace, but it soon appeared that the Cavaliers had the swiftest horses, for they speedily overtook the rebels, and fell with great fury on their rear, killing several, and driving others into the morass.

Owing to the narrowness of the causeway, Colonel Holland was unable to wheel round, and sustained considerable loss before he could reach firm ground. He

then formed as quickly as he could, and prepared to receive the Royalists, whom he found were commanded by the Earl of Derby in person.

A sharp conflict took place, but though the combatants were nearly equally matched in point of numbers, and fought well on both sides, it soon became evident that the Cavaliers were gaining ground. Colonel Holland, therefore, decided upon a retreat, but determined at the same time to carry off his royal captive, who was placed for safety at the rear.

Riding up to her, he said :

“ Fortune is against me, madam. Lord Derby may prove the victor, but he shall not rob me of my prize.”

“ I have no right to the title you bestow upon me,” she rejoined. “ And I refuse to accompany you.”

“Are you not the queen?” he exclaimed, in astonishment.

“Her majesty, I trust, is safe in Warrington,” she replied.

“Confusion!” he cried. “Have I been duped? Who are you? Your voice seems familiar to me.”

“You ought to know me, Colonel Holland,” she rejoined, removing her mask. “You have often seen me before.”

“Gertrude Rosworm!” he exclaimed. “I will not leave you here. You must give your father an explanation of your strange conduct. Come with me!”

But before he could seize her bridle, she dashed aside, and in another minute had joined the Royalists.

Shortly afterwards, Colonel Holland and the Parliamentarians were in full retreat. Lord Derby pursued them to the very

gates of Bolton, and then returned with his company across the moors to Lathom. He had sustained but little loss in the encounter, though the rebels suffered heavily.

In the confusion of the fight, Frank Standish and his men had liberated themselves from their captors, and recovered their arms. Nearly forty prisoners were taken by the victors to Lathom, and the queen, who had not yet departed, was greatly rejoiced at the result of the engagement.

Gertrude was regarded as the heroine of the day, and received high commendations from her majesty and the Countess of Derby.

On the following day, the queen set out with her attendants for Chester, and was escorted thither by Lord Derby and a large

party of horse. But she met with no interruption. Her majesty proposed to take Gertrude with her, but Lady Derby seemed loth to part with the young damsel, and she was allowed to remain.

End of Book the Second.

Book the Third.

THE STORMING OF LANCASTER.

I.

HOGHTON TOWER.

LORD DERBY remained for a day at Chester, which was now strongly garrisoned by the Earl of Rivers, and then finding the queen did not require his further services, returned to Lathom. Gladly would he have remained tranquil for a short time, but the whole country was in so disturbed a state that it was impossible to do so.

News was brought him that the important town of Preston had been taken by Sir John Seaton, Major-General of the Par-

liamentary force, and that Lancaster was threatened.

On receiving this intelligence, he determined to hasten to the assistance of the Royalists with all the force he could muster, and leave Lathom to the charge of the countess. Accordingly he set out on the same day with a body of two hundred and fifty men for Hoghton Tower—a large castellated mansion belonging to Sir Gilbert Hoghton, situated within a half a dozen miles of Preston. Hoghton Tower had been appointed as a rendezvous of the Royalists, and a beacon was burnt nightly there to summon them.

Nothing could be finer than the situation of this strong and stately fabric—nothing grander or more picturesque than its appearance; crowning the summit of a knoll, the base of which was washed on one side by the river Darwen, while on

the other it was environed by a large park, or rather forest, abounding in wild cattle, wild boar, and red deer.

Founded in the early part of Elizabeth's reign by Sir Thomas Hoghton, this stately structure overlooked the whole district. From its walls Preston could be descried on the heights on the further side of the Ribble, and the course of that noble river could be traced from Penwortham to the Irish Sea—its broad estuary looking like a lake. Blackburn, Leyland, Chorley, and several other towns were likewise visible, and beyond the limits of the forest a rich and fertile country gladdened the eye.

Through this dense wood the Earl of Derby and his company made their way to the castle.

Night had come on since they quitted Chorley, and the narrow road, arched over by the trees, seemed profoundly dark, and

when they emerged from it at the foot of the hill, the beacon fire, burning above them, and illumining the towers and walls of the mansion, produced a very striking effect.

Captain Standish had been sent on with a small party of men to announce his lordship's approach, so that when the earl reached the outer gate, he found it thrown wide open, and rode into the quadrangle without delay.

Neither here, nor elsewhere, were torches needed, for the beacon, placed on the summit of the second gatehouse, which was much loftier than the first, afforded light enough. In the inner court were assembled a number of servants, headed by Master Urmston, the steward.

Sir Gilbert de Hoghton was a strict Romanist, and at the moment when Lord Derby arrived, he was attending vespers

in his domestic chapel, so that the duty of receiving his lordship devolved upon the steward, who performed the task with great ceremony.

After assisting his lordship to dismount, he prayed him to enter the house, and conducted him to a spacious apartment called the Green Room, from the colour of its hangings. The room, which was well lighted up, was richly but cumbrously furnished, and the walls were adorned with portraits of the ancestors of the owner of the mansion—Sir Adam de Hoghton, who flourished in the time of Henry the Third, Sir Richard Hoghton, knight of the shire, when Edward the Sixth was king, and Sir Thomas de Hoghton, who built the tower in the early days of Elizabeth, and was killed at Lea by the Baron de Walton.

Here the Earl found Lord Molineux, who had arrived at the tower on the same

day with fifty horse, and shortly afterwards Sir Gilbert himself appeared.

In age the baronet was about fifty, and had a tall, stately figure, and handsome features. His habiliments were of black velvet, relieved by a lace collar.

"I am glad your lordship has brought so large a force with you," he said. "Captain Standish tells me you feared I should not be able to accommodate all your men. You have forgotten how many persons the tower contained when King James was my father's guest."

"But other Royalists may arrive, Sir Gilbert," said the earl; "and each will bring a score of men at least."

"There is ample room for a hundred more," rejoined Sir Gilbert. "Come with me, and I will speedily convince you I am right."

Thereupon they repaired to the outer

court, and found there was no lack of accommodation either for horses or men. Moreover, there was abundant supply of provisions.

As the earl had anticipated, several other Royalist leaders arrived, and a goodly supper was served in the great hall, of which more than a hundred persons partook.

That night the Earl of Derby occupied the splendid bedchamber assigned to King James during his stay at the tower, and seemed haunted by that monarch, whose portrait was hung over the fireplace. In a small adjoining chamber slept Frank Standish.

Next morning five hundred countrymen, armed with bills and clubs, arrived at the tower to join Lord Derby.

They were drawn up in the outer quad-

rangle, and when his lordship showed himself to them, with Lord Molineux, they threw up their hats, and shouted lustily, "God bless the king, and the Earl of Derby."

The earl thanked them heartily for their zeal and loyalty, and told them that with their aid he hoped to be able to deliver Preston and Lancaster from the rebels, upon which they shouted again as lustily as before, and declared they were quite ready to follow wherever he chose to lead them.

On returning to the house, Lord Derby found Daniel Trioche, his confidential French servant, who brought him a letter from the countess informing him that all was going on well at Lathom.

The earl was too busy at the time to write a reply, but he sent a tender message by Trioche, telling her ladyship that

he was just starting on an important expedition, and hoped she would soon receive good tidings of him.

“Tell her ladyship,” he added, “that my next letter to her shall be from Lancaster.”

Half an hour afterwards, Lord Derby marched from Hoghton Tower at the head of four hundred horse, and six hundred foot. He was accompanied by Lord Molineux, Sir Gilbert Hoghton, and the other Royalists. The billmen and clubmen were commanded by Frank Standish and Captain Hoghton—Sir Gilbert’s nephew.

At Walton-le-Dale, Lord Derby learnt that Lancaster had already been taken by the Parliamentary commanders—Colonel Holcroft, Major Sparrow, and Major Heywood; and that Preston was also very strongly garrisoned by Sir John Seaton, who had received large reinforcements from

Manchester and other towns, and had now fifteen hundred musketeers and several troops of horse.

After some consultation with Lord Molineux and Sir Gilbert, Lord Derby resolved not to attack either town, until he had augmented his own forces. He therefore crossed the river at Penwortham, and marched into the Fylde, a large tract lying between the estuaries of the Ribble and the Wyre, and took up his quarters at Kirkham and Lytham, and immediately issued warrants commanding all the inhabitants of the Fylde, above sixteen and under sixty, on pain of death, to appear before him at Kirkham, armed with the best weapons they could provide.

The summons was responded to by the whole district, which abounded in Romanists, and in less than a week he was joined by three thousand stalwart billmen

and clubmen. He was likewise joined by Sir John Girlington and Sir Thomas Tyldesley with six hundred men — half of whom were horse, and half musketeers.

Being now at the head of a sufficient force, he determined to assault Preston without further delay, when a circumstance occurred that induced him to change his plan, and begin with Lancaster.

END OF VOL. I.

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